

## CHAPTER I

The first permanent settlers to enter the Trans-Allegheny of Western Virginia, came from the Wappatomaka, (1) and were led by Samuel Pringle. Samuel and his younger brother John were soldiers in the British garrison at Fort Pitt, which they, with William Childers and Joseph Linsey deserted in 1761. (2) They fled first to the wilds of the Monongahela, but subsequently sought the glades at the head of the Youghiogheny, where they encamped about one year. In 1762 they ventured to the Looney's Creek settlement but almost immediately Childers and Linsey were arrested. The Pringles escaped to their old haunts where they remained in the employment of John Simpson, a trapper, until some time in 1764.

As the glades were now being invaded by hunters from the Wappatomaka, the trio resolved to retreat further west. By such move Simpson would find better hunting and the Pringles would be more secure from detection and arrest. While executing this resolution and after crossing the Cheat River at the Horse Shoe (bend) the trapper and the fugitives parted company as a result of a disagreement. Simpson proceeded to the mouth of Elk Creek, near the present site of Clarksburg, where he erected a camp and continued until permanent settlements were made on the western waters. He then disappeared, in all probability going to Kentucky. He appears to have been a man of fierce temperament. One Cottral, or Cottrell, met death at his hands in an altercation over two gallons of salt. The Cottrals were, however, known for their great fighting qualities.

The Pringles kept up Tygart's Valley, and reached the Buckhannon River (1764), where they took up residence in a hollow sycamore tree at the mouth of Turkey Run. (3) Here they resided until late in the autumn of 1767, when they had remaining but two charges of powder. Leaving these with Samuel, John recrossed the mountains for a supply of ammunition. While there he learned that peace had been declared with both French and Indian, and that they now could return in safety to the settlements. After some delay he hastened back to the wilderness camp to find his brother reduced to the verge of

(1) See page 415. (2) p. 415. (3) p. 416.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE PRINGLE SYCAMORE, MARCH, 1915

COURTESY OF MR. AND MRS. U. I. JENKINS



despair. One charge of powder Samuel had lost in a vain endeavor to kill a buck, but with the other he brought down a fine buffalo; otherwise he must have succumbed to the ravages of hunger. The continued absence of John had induced the belief that he had been apprehended and imprisoned.

The brothers, no longer fugitives, now determined to return to the Wappatomaka. The sequel was the rapid colonization of the Trans-Allegheny. Subsequently John settled in Kentucky. The time of his removal to the Blue Grass region is not known, but it was at an early date. No mention of him is found in connection with the settlements of the upper Monongahela after 1768; nor is it believed that he ever took up actual residence after abandoning the camp in the Sycamore.

One John Pringle was a settler on Chaplin's Fork, Kentucky, in 1780. He came with a fleet of three boats from the Wappatomaka, and in an encounter with the Indians, led by Simon Girty, Pringle's boat alone escaped. He married Rebecca Simpson, a sister to a John Simpson, from whom she inherited slaves in 1825. (4)

Samuel Pringle settled permanently on the Buckhannon, and was prominent in the border wars. From sworn statements preserved in the Government Pension Office, it would appear that Samuel Pringle was at one time during the Revolution, captain of a band of scouts, but as no claim for pension on account of his Revolutionary service was made, we find no actual record of his military career. (5) His wife, Charity Cutright, was the daughter of Benjamin Cutright, and a sister of John Cutright, Jr., the noted scout of the Buckhannon. A family tradition has it that Samuel and Charity were married before the fugitive brothers made residence in the Sycamore, where Mrs. Pringle joined her husband in 1767, guided by a path blazed by John when he first sought the settlements. Another account says they were not married until after the return of the brothers to the Wappatomaka, although a warm attachment had sprung up between the young couple, while the deserters were at Looney's Creek in 1762. It is more than probable that the marriage was consummated during the brief stay of Pringle at Looney's Creek, and that the devoted wife actually traversed the wilderness path to her absent husband.

The children of Samuel and Charity were William, John, Samuel, Elizabeth and another daughter whose name is not

(4) See page 416. (5) p. 416.

recalled. Their descendants are numerous in the Buckhannon country, while some are scattered through sections of Ohio and Indiana. (6)

The claim that the Pringles, as soldiers in the Royal Army, only came to America during the French and Indian wars, can not be accepted as fact. It is not probable that such men would have deserted and fled to a wilderness fraught with known dangers with which they were unqualified to cope. Border Colonial troops, as in the Patriot Army of the Revolution, chafed at restraint and discipline, and often deserted. The Pringles evinced a consummate skill in woodcraft, not attributable to the raw European soldier.

It is a remarkable coincidence that a William Pringle resided in Philadelphia, who had two sons named John and Samuel, born in 1728 and 1731 respectively.

It is not improbable that this family removed to the Virginia border and that the sons were identical with those of later renown.

Momentous events were destined to follow in the wake of these wilderness refugees. In the autumn of 1768, several adventurous and prospective settlers under the guidance of Samuel, visited the region of the Pringle refuge, and so well pleased were they, that the following spring they returned, selected lands, cleared small fields, planted crops and built cabins preparatory to bringing their families. After the crops were "laid by," the men returned to the settlements, and in the fall when they came back to harvest their corn, they found it entirely destroyed by buffaloes. This delayed the removal of the families, or at least a greater part of them, until the winter of 1770.

With Pringle's band of prospectors of 1769, came a youth of about nineteen — Jesse Hughes. He was of Welsh extraction, slight in his proportions, and light and active in his movements. He possessed a form as erect as that of an Indian, and had endurance and fleetness of limb that no man of his day surpassed. His height was about five feet and nine inches, and his weight never exceeded one hundred and forty-five pounds. He had thin lips, a narrow chin, a nose that was sharp and inclined to the Roman form, little or no beard, light hair, and eyes of that indefinable color that one person would pronounce grey, another, blue, but which was both — and neither. They were piercing, cold, fierce, and as penetrating and restless as those of the mountain panther.

(6) See page 416.



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(6) See page 416.



Said one who knew him: "Hughes had eyes like a rattlesnake." It has been averred, and without contradiction, that Jesse Hughes, like the famed "Deaf Smith" of Texas, could detect the presence of an Indian at a considerable distance by the mere sense of smell. He was of an irritable, vindictive, and suspicious nature, and his hatred, when aroused, knew no bounds. Yet it is said that he was true to those who gained his friendship. Such was Jesse Hughes in character and appearance when he arrived in that country destined to become his future home, and where he became the noted hunter, the great scout and famous Indian fighter of Northwestern Virginia.

In an interview with an intelligent and reputable lady, now deceased, who, in her childhood, had known Jesse Hughes, and had been intimately acquainted with some of his family, I was given this vivid description of the characteristics and personal appearance of the great Indian fighter:

"Hughes' countenance was hard, stern and unfeeling; his eyes were the most cruel and vicious I ever saw. He was profane and desperately wicked. He was very superstitious, and a firm believer in witchcraft. (7) He told horrible stories of how witches would crawl like spiders over the naked bodies of babies, causing them to cry out from pain and misery; and he would conjure to counteract the witches, and offer incantations to overcome their evil influence. His temper was fierce and uncontrollable, often finding vent in the abuse of his family. In a drunken brawl near West's Fort, he and a Mr. Stalnaker nearly killed Ichabod Davis, his neighbor, leaving the unconscious victim for dead. Hughes fled from the settlement, but returned after Davis recovered. He never worked, but spent his time in hunting and scouting. His clothing was colored in the ooze made from the bark of the chestnut oak; he would wear no other color, this shade harmonizing with the forest hues and rendering him less conspicuous to game and Indians. When scouting, his dress consisted only of the long hunting shirt, (8) belted at the waist, open leggins, moccasins, and a brimless cap; or a handkerchief bound about his head. Thus dressed, he was ever ready for the chase, or the trail of the Indian foe." (9)

When further questioned as to his traits of character, the lady bluntly closed the interview by saying, "I would not tell all I know about Jesse Hughes for this much gold," designating the amount she could hold in her doubled-hands. "There are," she continued, "too many of his descendants living about here." Nor could she be induced to speak further on the subject.

His mode of dress, as above described, has been amply verified from other sources. When Indian incursions were expected,

(7) See page 416. (8) p. 416. (9) p. 417.

Jesse Hughes wore his hunting shirt both day and night, without regard to weather.

Mrs. Catharine Simms-Allman remembered that when she was a little girl, Jesse Hughes came to her father's house on Hacker's Creek, one mile below West's Fort, early one morning, and ordered them to run to the fort. Upon that occasion his dress consisted of the hunting shirt and moccasins only. He was riding a pony without a saddle, and mounted her mother behind him, and with one of the children in his arms, galloped to the fort. This incident occurred while Hughes lived at the mouth of Jesse's Run.

At the end of his cabin, Hughes erected a "lean-to," where at all times he kept his pony ready for instant use in case of an Indian alarm.

Of the pioneers who came with Pringle into the Buckhannon country, *Withers* says:

"The others of the party (William Hacker, Thomas and Jesse Hughes, John and William Radcliff and John Brown) appear to have employed their time exclusively in hunting, neither of them making any improvement of land for his own benefit. Yet they were of considerable service to the new settlement. Those who had commenced clearing land, were supplied by them with an abundance of meat, while in their hunting excursions through the country, a better knowledge of it was obtained, than could have been acquired, had they been engaged in making improvements.

"In one of these expeditions they discovered and gave name to Stone Coal Creek, which flowing westwardly, induced the supposition that it discharged itself directly into the Ohio. Descending this creek, to ascertain the fact, they came to its confluence with a river, which they then called, and has since been known as the West Fork. After having gone some distance down the river, they returned by a different route to the settlement, better pleased with the land on it and some of its tributaries, than with that on Buckhannon." (10)

The hunters evidently returned to the settlement by way of Hacker's Creek. The Indian name for this stream signifies "Muddy Water."

The Pringles had never crossed the divide, to any of the waters falling into the West Fork, and knew nothing of the topography of the country. Of the six who comprised this band of explorers, the three first named became prominent in the border annals. The Radcliffs settled on Hacker's Creek, (11) and we find that William Ratliff (Radcliff) claimed land there prior to 1781. John subsequently gained notoriety for murdering Indians on the Ohio frontier, (12) but we find nothing definite concerning

(10) See page 418. (11) p. 418. (12) p. 418.



the later life of William. One William Radcliff was a pensioner of the Revolutionary War, whose certificate for eighty dollars per year was issued May 16, 1833, at which time he was a resident of Lewis County, Virginia. His original declaration for pension is missing, and the only narrative of his services that we find is from Special Pension Agent, W. G. Singleton, in his report to the Commissioner of Pensions, after a re-examination of Radcliff in 1834.

#### SINGLETON'S REPORT:

"In a conversation between Radcliff and Weeden Hoffman, Radcliff states that he only served six months in the war and that he only claimed six months' service in his declaration.

"On July 30th I saw Radcliff and received from him the following narrative of his services in the Revolutionary War. In his sixteenth or seventeenth year of age, he served as substitute in the place of Adam Harpole for two months, and marched from Hardy County, Virginia, under he don't recollect whom nor where to, and immediately after the defeat of Cornwallis at Little Fort, Virginia, he marched from Hardy County to Winchester, Virginia, under Capt. James Stephanson, and served under him at latter place for two months, guarding the British prisoners. Capt. Stephanson's company, except five or six men including himself, were discharged at the end of two months, at which time Capt. Jas. Berry came to Winchester with a company. Himself and the four or five men above mentioned were attached to Capt. Joseph Berry's company and served under him, guarding the prisoners for two months. Then Capt. Berry's company (except the five or six men including himself above mentioned) was discharged; then the five or six men including himself were attached to Capt. James Simeral's company and served under him two months. A Colonel Kennedy commanded at Winchester thinks he went to Winchester about October 1st and got his discharge about May 20th, which was signed by Col. Joseph Holm's captain. Wamsley with his declaration expects that the narrative now given is the same given to Wamsley by contract. Wamsley was to have the half of the first pay drawn."

(Signed)

His

WILLIAM X RADCLIFF.

Mark.

Witnesses:

NATHAN GOFF.

NOTE: "The statement of Radcliff is untrue in all particulars except as to the contract with Wamsley. This is one of the cases upon which suit has been instituted. The original papers are missing."

(Signed)

November 1, 1834.

W. G. SINGLETON.

This pensioner could hardly have been the William Ratliff of the Buckhannon exploring party of 1769. According to his declaration to Singleton, he was only sixteen or seventeen at the time of Gen. Cornwallis' surrender in 1781. This would make him but twelve years old at the time of the exploration in question.

Nothing is known of the subsequent history of John Brown, a member of the exploring party. It has been surmised that both William Radcliff and Brown settled on the West Fork. (13) This is true of Radcliff, for Hacker's Creek is a branch of the West Fork, but I doubt if this supposition can be verified in Brown's case. No trace of his history can be found subsequent to his advent into the Buckhannon settlement in 1769. One John Brown was a resident on the waters of the West Fork, about the close of the Revolution, but his record precludes the inference that he was of the exploring party in question.

In the application for pension as a Revolutionary soldier, made in Lewis County, Aug. 7, 1833, it would appear that Brown was born in 1764, and was raised in Hardy County, Virginia. March 1st, 1781, he volunteered from Hampshire County, in the Virginia Militia under Capt. Michael Stump, and marched to Fredericksburg, Va., and from thence, under orders of Gen. George Weedon, to Richmond, where they encamped on the hill where the capitol now (1833) stands. He was in the command of Col. William Darke, under Gen. Porter Muhlenberg. They continued in camp about three weeks, when the enemy entered the city, and the Virginia troops retreated to Raccoon Ford, where they were joined by Gen. Anthony Wayne. The Americans then turned and drove the British back to Richmond. Wayne's army encamped for seven days near Bacon branch, preparing to make an attack, but on the morning of the intended assault, there was a dense fog, which enabled the enemy, whom Brown believed was commanded by Lord Cornwallis [correct], to escape towards New Kent Court House. The Americans pursued and came up with the enemy near New Kent, and the two armies skirmished for two days, alternately pursuing and retreating. Wayne was then joined by Gen. Lafayette, and the British retreated towards their fleet. The American forces went to Williamsburg, and later to Yorktown.

About October 1st, 1781, just prior to the surrender of Gen. Cornwallis, Brown received his discharge from Capt. Anderson, and returned home, having served seven months.

Brown then moved to (now) Lewis County, West Virginia, where he was still living in 1833. On November 1st, 1781, he was ordered out as an Indian spy by Col. Benjamin Wilson, under Capt. Christopher Carpenter, and spied in that part of Virginia,

(13) See page 418.



which in 1833 comprised Wood, Nicholas, Harrison and Lewis counties. He continued under Carpenter until August, 1782, when he left his company, and was commissioned an Ensign of Spies under Colonels Lowther and Wilson, and was in command of Indian spies from August 1st, 1782, to June 1st, 1783, when he ceased to act as an Ensign. Brown was allowed \$146.66 per year.

Subsequently, there were doubts as to Brown's integrity and his right to a pension; and adverse testimony was taken by W. G. Singleton, U. S. District Attorney, Virginia, Nov. 4, 1834.

John Waggoner, of Lewis County, had known Brown all his life. They had, when young, resided in Hardy County, and afterwards were neighbors in Lewis County. He (Waggoner) had never heard of Brown doing service as a soldier in the Revolution, nor did he believe that he did. Henry Flesher, of Harrison County, stated that Brown came to western Virginia after the close of the Revolution, at which time he was not quite grown. Flesher was of the opinion that Brown had been a soldier. Isaac Washburn, of Harrison County, had known Brown from his earliest recollection. Brown and himself had been posted or stationed at Brown's Fort (built by Brown's father) after the close of the Revolution. Brown was then a young man of twenty years or more. Edward, a younger brother of John Brown, stated "That his brother John was in service as a soldier of the Revolution for three months, but he thinks not longer."

The testimony most damaging to the claimant was that of William Powers. Mr. Powers was a man of integrity, and his statement is interesting. It reveals the military and social status of the Trans-Allegheny during the Revolution.

I quote as reported by Singleton.

"Wm Powers resided in w. Va. now Harrison Co. all the time except 1 year during the Rev. war. Knew Brown in Hardy county in 1778-1779. he Powers was at school there at that time. Brown settled in w. Va. where he now [1834] lives in 1785 removed from Hardy county in that year, knows nothing of Browns Rev. service. Brown was an Indian spy after his removal to the west in 1785 as before stated. Brown was not in the settlement (w. Va) in 1782, 1783, 1784 as stated by him he could not have been without his (Powers) knowledge, there were but few in the settlement at that period. every man engaged in defending the country was known to each other. Powers knew every man able to bear arms, and almost every woman and child, the settlement to which he refers is embraced in the present limits of Harrison, Tyler, Lewis and

the n. part of Kenhawas co. having heard Browns statement read Mr Powers states confidently that Brown is mistaken.

"Capt. Copelaw also argues Browns statements are false. \* \* \* \*

(Signed)

W. G. SINGLETON

Nov. 4, 1834."

Mr. Singleton in transmitting this testimony, spoke derogatory of Brown's character, and adversely to his right to a pension. He also submitted a statement from Brown of his military services, which were at variance, in some respects with his first declaration.





## CHAPTER II

It is astonishing when we realize how little there is recorded of the actual border life of Jesse Hughes, and other noted scouts of Northwestern Virginia. Especially is this true when we remember that Mr. Withers wrote his *Chronicles of Border Warfare* in the midst of the very scenes of some of the most daring escapades and bloody achievements of border strife; and this, too, while many of the principal actors in the tragedies were still living. It is but natural that we should expect a reasonably complete record of local events; but, unfortunately, we find the record as preserved for us woefully deficient. A careful perusal of the excellent work in question, reveals the fact that a greater part of that section of it which deals with local affairs is not so complete, nor are the events so carefully portrayed, as is that part which treats of the matters pertaining to more distant localities. It cannot be denied that the first part of the volume, which sets out the general history of the more distant settlements, is more complete, more concise, and far more minutely written than the latter portion, which deals with events largely local. Dr. Thwaites recognized this deficiency. In the *Editor's Preface* to the revised edition he says:

"The weakness of the traditional method is well exemplified in Withers' work. His treatment of many of the larger events on the border may now be regarded as little else than a thread on which to hang annotations; \* \* \* (1)

There must have been a cause for this deficiency, which becomes very apparent when we read Dr. Lyman C. Draper's *Memoir of Withers*, and the letter from Mr. Bond set out below. Dr. Draper tells us that:

"\* \* \* Mr. Withers got nothing whatever for his diligence and labor in producing it [*Border Warfare*], save two or three copies of the work itself. He used to say that had he published the volume himself, he would have made it much more complete, and better in every way; for he was hampered, limited and hurried—often correcting proof of the early, while writing the later chapters." (2)

The letter from Mr. Bond is in response to an inquiry, and is as follows:

(1) See page 418. (2) p. 418.

"LOST CREEK, W. VA., January 23, 1898.

MR. L. V. MCWHORTER,  
MASON, OHIO.

DEAR SIR:

"Your letter received, and in reply will say; I am a grandson of William Powers, one of the men who got up *Border Warfare*; William Hacker (3) was the other. This work lay dormant in their hands for many years. Hacker passed away first. Powers purchased Hacker's interest in the work, and it lay in his hands until 1831, when Joseph Israel, an editor in Clarksburg, bought the manuscript and arranged for its publication by employing Alexander Scott Withers to prepare it for the press. Accordingly Mr. Withers took up the work, and after he had it about half completed some friend told him that he was likely to get nothing for his labor, and that Israel was poor and could not raise the amount of money agreed upon. Mr. Withers did not want to leave the work in that condition and said, 'I will dispose of it in some shape.' So he ran through the most notable and prominent features, leaving the balance entirely out.

"Now from this time on you and all others will see that the second part of *Border Warfare* is rather incomplete and scattered as compared to the first part of the volume.

"This is the history that my grandfather gave me of the work from his own lips. My grandfather lived on a farm adjoining Jane Lew [West Fort], about three miles from Withers' office, and was there several times while Withers was preparing the work, and he told me these things himself.

"I am the only man that can give this history, as I am the only one living who took any account of these things. I am now in my eighty-second year.

"In regard to Jesse Hughes, my grandfather told me that they had hunted Indians together, and were in the volunteer company pursuing the Indians on the Little Kanawha, when John Bonnett was killed; that Jesse was the best trailer among the whites and could trail with any Indian on the border. Jesse's brother Ellis was also a noted scout. While he could not trail with Jesse, he was the greater with the rifle, and could hit an Indian under any and all circumstances within the range of his rifle. He was a dead shot. (4)

"When hunting, Ellis could get more game than Jesse at long range, but at the end of the day Jesse would have as much, but he would get it by slipping upon it unawares. In this, as in trailing Indians, he had no equal."

Yours truly,  
LEVI BOND.

Here, then, we have the solution to the mystery of the incomplete and defective character of the history in question. This very apparent fault is lamentable. It is the incidental details that give interest to local history. There is little wonder that Mr. Withers became discouraged and lost interest in his noble but arduous task. A less energetic and patriotic man would have dropped the work entirely when it became apparent that there would be no compensation for his labor. All honor to Mr. Withers!

(3) See page 418. (4) p. 418.



Yet, William Hacker and William Powers, the true authors of that part of the history in question, have never received the recognition and credit due them for the invaluable service they rendered in the preservation of this record. To them we are indebted for most of the narrative of border strife in and about Clarksburg, West's Fort, Buckhannon and adjacent settlements. The character of Mr. Bond is above question, and his account of the origin of *Border Warfare* has long been an open secret with many of the older inhabitants of that region. (5)

William Powers was born in Frederick County, Virginia, November 9, 1765. He came with his father, John Powers, to Simpson's Creek, a tributary of the West Fork, where, in 1781, a certificate of homestead entry was granted "John Powers, 400 acres on Simpson's Creek, adjoining lands of James Anderson, to include his settlement made in 1772." William Powers at a very early age became a scout of prominence. In March, 1781, when but fifteen years old, he enlisted for nine months (during the scouting season) in Captain Joseph Gregory's Company of Indian spies; place of enlistment, Monongalia County, Virginia. March 2, 1782, he re-enlisted for the same length of time, in the same company. During this time, he was stationed at Power's Fort (probably named for his father) on Simpson's Creek, and was engaged in spying from that fort to the Ohio River and over the territory that afterwards comprised the counties of Ohio, Tyler, Wood, Lewis, Harrison, and Randolph. In March, 1783, he was made ensign of a company of scouts until the first day of September, following. During this enlistment he was engaged in scouting throughout Monongalia County. It is singular that Withers has not even mentioned William Powers' name in connection with a single incident of the frontier. This, however, is true of other deserving pioneers, and is much to be regretted. Powers was one of the scouts who searched for the marauding Indians that desolated the home of Thomas Cunningham (6) on Bingamon Creek in 1785; and was with Colonel Lowther's party in pursuit of Indians on the Little Kanawha, in 1787, which resulted so fatally to John Bonnett.

He was also with Colonel Lowther in 1781, in his pursuit and attack on the Indian Camp on the Hughes River, when the Leading Creek captives were rescued. These events will be more fully treated elsewhere in this volume.

(5) See page 418. (6) p. 418.

Powers was connected with many other thrilling occurrences of border strife.

It was within a few days after Powers' first enlistment, 1781, that the Indians came near Booth's Creek and killed Capt. John Thomas, wife, and six of their children, carrying off the remaining child, a small boy, prisoner. (7)

Powers, in his declaration for pension, October 1st, 1833, states that it was in 1781 that John Owens and John Juggins were killed by Indians on Booth's Creek, in (now) Harrison County. *Withers* says that this tragedy occurred in June, 1780. (8) Powers also states that it was in 1782, that the Indians killed James Owens, and took prisoner Gilbert Hostead (Hustead) in the same region. This is again in contradiction of *Withers*, who gives the dates of these transactions as 1778. (9).

In March, 1783, he enlisted for the third time, and was elected Ensign, or Second Lieutenant of scouts, by his company. On April 4th he marched from Powers Fort to the mouth of Bingamon Creek, in now Harrison County, where he "stationed part of his men on the site of an old Indian town;" the remaining ones he stationed "at the mouth of Jones Run, a branch of Ten Mile Creek, about thirty miles from Bingamon Creek." These men he left to make regular scouting tours, while he traveled from station to station in the capacity of commander. During this season Indians came to the neighborhood of Simpson Creek and stole several horses belonging to Major Benjamin Robinson, who with others made a fruitless pursuit of the marauders. This was evidently the Major Robinson mentioned by *Withers*. (10) Powers disbanded his men in September, 1783.

Powers' discharge papers, with his commission of Ensign, were all misplaced, or lost in a fire which destroyed his house with its contents. John Brown and John Schoolcraft both testified to the good character and veracity of William Powers, who also gave as reference Alexander West and Adam Flesher. Powers was granted a pension, but in April, 1840, John H. Hays, of McWhorter's Mills, Lewis County, Virginia, contrived to have it stopped by reporting to the Pension Office that Powers was not entitled to a pension. In his protest Hays mentions the "Messrs. Bonnetts, (11) Adam Flesher, Hezekiah Hess and several others" who had been granted pensions for services similar to those of Mr. Powers,

(7) See page 419. (8) p. 419. (9) p. 419. (10) p. 419. (11) p. 419.



but later their names had been dropped from the list, and they required to refund the amounts paid them.

Notwithstanding Hays had declared to the Pension Office his ability and intention of proving his charges by affidavits, only one, that of Phoebe Cunningham, was submitted. Her testimony was "that she was acquainted with William Powers since the close of the Revolutionary War and believes that he was about thirteen years of age." Sworn to April 1st, 1840, before James Malone, Justice of the Peace for Lewis County, Virginia. In October of the same year, in response to an inquiry, Powers received official notice that his pension was stopped, but it seems he took no immediate steps to have his name restored.

On the 16th of December, 1846, the following testimony in behalf of Powers was forwarded from Weston, Lewis County, Va., to the Commissioner of Pensions:

SIR:

"I have been acquainted with William Powers for more than 30 years. He has acted as Sheriff for Lewis County, Va., and has discharged the duties of a Justice of the Peace in Harrison and Lewis counties for more than 30 years. He stands well before the community where he is acquainted, as an honest and upright man and I believe that any statement he would make under oath or otherwise would be believed by those who are acquainted with him. I will add that John H. Hays is a man of bad character and not to be relied on."

(Signed) J. McWHORTER. (12)

A similar letter was signed by Weedon Hoffman, Minter Bailey, Levi Maxwell, William I. Bland, John Lorentz, and Thomas Bland, all men of unquestionable repute. At length the case was referred to the Secretary of the Interior with the following result:

"DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

October 28, 1850.

J. L. EDWARDS, ESQ.,  
Commissioner of Pensions.

SIR:

"I herewith return the papers in the case of William Powers, Esq., of Lewis County, Va., and I am of the opinion that his name should be restored to the Pension roll under the Act of June 7, 1732, at \$80.00 per annum from the period when he was last paid.

"From examination of papers I can find no ground for the action of the Pension Office, but on the contrary the U. S. District Attorney for the Western District of Virginia who was especially charged with an examination of the case, reported in writing that Mr. Powers was entitled to his pension, and recommended his con-

(12) See page 420.

tinuance, whilst the individual who was instrumental in his being stricken from the roll is shown by the records of Lewis County to have committed crime for which he was indicted by the Grand Jury, and is returned by the Sheriff as a fugitive from justice. I am, very respectfully

Your obedient servant,

ALEX. H. H. STUART, Secy."

Thus, after a period of ten years, the name of William Powers was restored to the pension roll. The offense for which Hays was indicted was forgery, committed August 1st, 1841. He moved to the Northwest and was never apprehended. It is probable that he located on Military Bounty Lands, for it is found that in 1841 he was negotiating for 4000 acres due Captain John Baily, or heirs, as a Revolutionary soldier, Virginia Line.

My father, who is still living, (13) was well acquainted with William Powers, and testifies to his good character and veracity. He recalls the trouble that Powers had with his pension and its final adjustment. Hays, he says, was a man of very bad repute, and fled to the then remote Northwest. His place of refuge was never known.

William Powers was well educated for his day, and his wide experience on the frontier, where he "knew every man able to bear arms," and practically every woman and child in the upper Monongahela settlements, well qualified him for the role of local historian. He was sometimes called "Major" Powers, but if he was entitled to that distinction, it was doubtless as major of militia at a later day, as no mention of such rank is found in the early records. The "Major Power" referred to by Withers (14) was evidently the Major Powers who settled in (now) Barbour County, West Va., in 1776.

William Powers was about five feet six inches in height, well built, spare and very erect, even at eighty-nine. His complexion was light with dark hair. He married Hannah Stout, a sister of Dr. Hezekiah Stout, and settled near West's Fort. He died June 6, 1856, and was buried under the honors of war in the Broad Run Cemetery, Lewis County, West Va. His wife is also buried there. Their children were:

Thomas, married Millie Hart; John, married Percella Chen-verout; Ezekiel, married Miss — Jones; Benjamin, married Miss — Stout; William, Jr., married Charity Paxton, second wife, Miss — Lightburn, sister to Gen. Joseph Lightburn;

(13) See page 420. (14) p. 420.



Sarah, married Abel Bond; Prudence, married Richard Bond; Margaret, married Eli Vanhorne.

Abel and Richard Bond were brothers; sons of Richard Bond, a son of Samuel Bond, native of England, and whose descent can be traced to the nobility of knighthood. Levi Bond, whose letter appears in the first part of this chapter, is a son of Abel Bond and Sarah Powers. He was born April 3, 1817. A shoemaker by trade, on his ninety-seventh birthday he nailed the soles on a pair of boots without experiencing any material fatigue. He is, at the writing of this paragraph, October 10th, 1914, still living and bids fair to pass the one-hundred milestone.

His younger brother, Augustine P. Bond, born in 1832, went west with his parents in 1845. Settling in Wisconsin, he crossed the plains in the Spring of 1864, and spent the Summer in a mining camp at now Virginia City, Montana. With a fleet of flat boats he returned in the Fall, fighting Indians for seven hundred and fifty miles down the Yellow Stone and Missouri Rivers, to Yankton, Dakota. His experience on the western frontier has been similar to that of his noted grandfather of the Trans-Allegheny.

Touching the Grigsby tragedy mentioned by *Withers*, (15) Mr. Bond writes me: "Bettie, the wife of Charles Grigsby, whose home was raided on Grigsby's Run, a branch of Rooting Creek, June, 1777, was buried with her infant where killed near the top of the ridge on Lost Creek, opposite the village of that name. The grave was never marked. I stood by the side of her grave in June, 1898, — 121 years after her death — and it was then just as it was seventy years ago when I first saw it; a slight depression in the ground. Her little child had been dead some time when the mother was killed, but she still carried it in her arms."

William Hacker, Jr., it is claimed, was the first white child born on Hacker's Creek, but I am inclined to believe that his birth occurred on the Wappatomaka, just prior to the parents settling on the Western waters. In either event, he grew to maturity amid the tumult of border forays, and doubtless participated in the defense of the settlements during the later years of Indian hostility. He was a man of more than ordinary ability, and considering his environments, was well educated. He was schoolteacher, minister and magistrate, and in the discharge of these diversified duties throughout the settlements, he had unsurpassed facilities for collecting historical data.

(15) See page 420.

Equipped as these men were for their task, it is reasonable to suppose that their work would be replete and thorough, but necessarily biased by partisanism.

While it is evident that Mr. Withers cast aside some of the material placed at his disposal, we are not to infer that he came into possession of every event of historic interest. The darker side of the border story, as seen from the standpoint of the Indian, was perhaps never revealed to him. When we remember that Mr. Powers was an active scout and Indian hunter, and that one of the Hackers, at least, was notorious for his murder of peaceable Indians (16) and that both were associates of others who were engaged in deeds of shocking barbarity, we need no longer wonder that so little was chronicled touching certain events that appear in their best light when buried in the blackness of oblivion. The same motive that prompted the good old lady to declare that "not for a handful of gold" would she speak further, was more patent in the earlier days than at the present time.

The partisan writer cannot give just treatment to those who are opposed to his own conception of right and wrong; nor is it to be expected that the hand that wields the sword will pen an unbiased version of the fray. Charity, the one potent element of impartiality, is never found in the acrimonious flow of "gun powder ink," and unfortunate are the people who must depend upon the enemy of their race for a true chronicling of their grievances.

Our border annals have all been recorded by white men. Strong racial affinity, animosity and hatred of the Indian have colored the record and prevented a fair statement of the facts. The Indian, hardly regarded by the early settlers as human, has ever been presented in the most terrible and hideous character that imagination could conceive. As thus pictured, his supreme passions were murder, plunder, torture and revenge. On the other hand, his white foe, often equally savage and more cruel, has been extolled as a hero moved with a holy zeal to protect home and country against "savage" incursions and to advance civilization and Christianity. His acts of revolting barbarity have been excused, obscured, suppressed, and the result is a partial and one-sided history. From Plymouth Rock to the Golden Gate this has been true. The "Custer Massacre" and the "Battle (?)

(16) See page 420.



of Wounded Knee" are modern incidents illustrative of this point. When in 1876, General Custer and his command were annihilated in a square up and down fight on the Little Big Horn by the strategic Sioux, and this too, when the challenge had been given by Custer himself the event was heralded abroad as a horrible Indian massacre by Sitting Bull's horde of merciless savages. The fact that the patriotic Sioux were in reality fighting for their homes and the right to even exist was not considered, or at least, was thought of as a matter of minor importance.

On the field of the Wounded Knee in 1890, United States soldiers having the advantage in numbers of more than four to one, and of rapid-fire machine guns, shot to death more than ninety men and boys, fifty women and young girls, and eighteen helpless children, several of them infants. This event was proclaimed to the world as a "Great Indian Battle," despite the fact that the Sioux had surrendered and were hemmed in by a cordon of troops who had partly disarmed them before the firing began. All the ghastly details will never be known. I have it from good authority, from one who was present when the outbreak occurred, that when the action began, all the Indians save not to exceed forty-five had surrendered their guns. Many were sitting on the ground smoking. They were without a leader. Their Chief, Big Foot, at the time lay dying in his tepee with pneumonia. At the first crash of the guns, the dying chieftain feebly raised himself on his couch, only to fall back riddled by a score of bullets. Here is one of the incidents that went to make up the "great battle."

A mounted soldier pursued a little Indian boy. Perhaps the lad was five or six years old. Seeing that he could not escape by running, he made frantic and piteous efforts to conceal his little body in the sand. The soldier fired at him but missed. Another trooper came to his assistance, dismounted, knelt, and shot the little fellow through the hips! The troopers rode away in pursuit of other "hostiles." When the relief party came the dying boy was found and carried to the agency buildings. The story leaked out. Some time afterwards a large red-haired cavalryman was discovered at the edge of the camp stabbed through the heart. He was the soldier who had shot the Indian boy.

During the Bannock uprising in 1878, a party of United States soldiers pursued a band of hostiles into a canyon on Snake River and indiscriminately slaughtered them all, men, women,

and children, including babes in arms. A soldier fatally shot a Bannock warrior; he sprang from his horse and with a savage sweep of his knife disemboweled the dying Indian. Then seizing the scalp-lock and placing his foot on the Indian's neck, proceeded, with the help of his knife, to tear the scalp from the head of his writhing victim. After the battle (?) some of the soldiers found an Indian baby yet unharmed, perhaps placed in some shelter by its mother before stricken to death in that charnal glen. This babe, which could scarce sit alone, was placed on a boulder at some distance for target practice. While the soldiers were discussing among themselves as to who should have the first shot, an Indian armed only with a "pepper-box" pistol was discovered hiding in a nearby thicket. The infant was left for a time, and an attempt made to dislodge the warrior. With his antiquated weapon he killed one of his assailants, deterring the others from rushing upon him. Then a howitzer heavily charged with grape-shot was turned upon this lone Indian and the discharge tore him into fragments, which the soldiers carried out one by one. These brave soldiers of a civilized and Christian nation, again turned their attention to the "hostile" upon the boulder. No less than a half dozen rifle balls one after another were sent tearing through its tender body. The officer in charge of these troops "could not see very well," consequently "knew not what was being done."

A late ex-soldier of repute said to me "I was a private in a West Virginia Regiment, Federal Army during the Civil War, and at the close of that struggle, my term of enlistment not being expired, was sent with others to fight Indians on the Kansas frontier. One day we captured five warriors, members of a band which had been committing depredations, and our commandant determined to treat them to a severe death. Rude frames were constructed by nailing four poles together. In these the prisoners were laid, their feet and hands extended and securely tied to the side timbers. The frames were then set up and braced, leaving the victims suspended by the lashings. They were given neither food nor drink and at the end of three days all were dead. No, they made no outcry, not even a moan, but died like sullen dogs. As a warning to other Indians, the frames with their ghastly settings were left standing."

Jim Walsie, a Warm Springs Indian of integrity, gave me the following incident: "Long time ago [in the sixties] I was



scout for government in war with Snake Indians. One day troops found small party Snakes in Blue Mountains, Oregon. Our commander, Captain John, a white man, says: 'Snakes bad people, kill um all. Kill Snake man, Snake woman, little gal, little boy and little papoose.' Then soldiers surround Snakes and shoot all dead. Then they scalp Snakes; and one man say I scalp a woman. It is a lie; I no scalp woman."

For actions like the above there was no excuse; but our occupancy of the country was a conquest which meant the destruction of the Indian tribes to whom the soil by right belonged. Every act, however cruel and unjust, which tended to hasten that result was supposed to be in the interest of the white man. These deeds were justified by a large element on the frontiers, and if any man raised his voice in protest he was accused of being against his race and its known policy. For these reasons, the revolting actions of the white men were modified in the accounts of them, and when possible they were kept secret. Much of what we have has been distorted by the historian. True accounts of many incidents of border history have been lost or never written because those who condemned them feared the vengeance of the more savage scouts. Life on the border tried men's souls. It gave to some the outlet for a venomous passion for blood. Many deeds were too dark for the printed page. These were held in the memory, related around the cabin-hearth and the hunter's camp-fire with bated breath, and thus became the tradition of the border days. The record is incomplete, and it is now impossible ever to make it complete.

On the other hand, atrocities committed by the Indians were occasionally suppressed. The motive was merciful, that the family of the victim be spared unnecessary anguish.

John Harper was a soldier of the Revolution, and served seven years as a private, Virginia troops. He came to the Northwestern Territory in 1800, and settled on Mill Creek, near Cincinnati. His son, James Harper, was born in Berkley County, Virginia, 1786. He enlisted for the war of 1812, and served on the Northwestern frontier with General Harrison. In company with fourteen other soldiers, he was sent with a dispatch to an outlying post, with strict orders not to fire on Indians, if any were met, unless attacked. While en route a few Indians presented themselves, and were fired upon, when they fled. The soldiers pursued,

and fell into an ambushade. Only a few escaped. Harper, when last seen by his companions, was captured with one or more Indian scalps at his belt. He was carried to some point on the Lakes and burned at the stake. Through commiseration for his parents, the tragedy was never made public.

This story was given me by Mr. John Delaplane of Fort Jefferson, Ohio, an immediate descendant of the Harper family, and is here published for the first time.





## CHAPTER III

There is considerable mention of Jesse Hughes in the annals of the early settlement of Northwestern Virginia, particularly in those portions relating to the Indian wars of the period. But taken all together there is not enough to give the reader any accurate idea of Hughes and the important part he played in the settlement of the central regions of the present State of West Virginia. It will, however, aid the reader much when combined with what has been preserved herein and published for the first time. For this reason I have decided to reproduce in this chapter the extended reference to him found in the *History of the Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia*, by Dr. Willis DeHass, Wheeling, 1851. Another reason for this quotation is that this work is so very rare that it cannot be consulted by the average reader. It is a work of high order and has been an authority for more than half a century. A few references to Hughes from other sources will be found in this chapter.

### JESSE HUGHES

"One of the most active, daring and successful Indian hunters in the mountain region of Virginia, was Jesse Hughes. He has not inappropriately been styled the Wetzels of that portion of the state, and in many respects, certainly was not undeserving of that distinctive appellation. Jesse Hughes possessed in an imminent degree the rare constituents of courage and energy. These qualities, so essential in those days of savage warfare, gained for him the confidence of the sturdy men by whom he was surrounded, and often induced them to select him for the post of leader in their various expeditions against the enemy. Many are the tales of adventure which the people of West Fork and Little Kanawha relate of this notable personage. A few of these we have collected and now give.

"Hughes was a native of the region to which his operations were chiefly confined. He was born on the headwaters of the Monongahela, and grew to manhood amid the dangers and privations which the people of that section of Virginia endured during the long years of a border warfare. Early learning that the rifle and tomahawk were his principal means of maintenance and defense, he became an adept in their use and refused to acknowledge a superior anywhere. Passionately devoted to the wood, he became invaluable to the settlements as hunter and scout. A man of delicate frame, but an iron constitution, he could endure more fatigue than any of his associates, and thus was enabled to remain abroad at all seasons without inconvenience or detriment. Many were the threatened blows which his vigilance averted, and numerous lives of helpless settlers his strong arm reached forth to save. The recollection of his services and devotion is still cherished

with a lively feeling of admiration by the people of the region with which his name is so intimately associated.

"The following incidents illustrative of his career, we derive from sources entitled to every credit. The one which immediately follows is from an old and intimate friend of Hughes (Mr. Renick of Ohio), to whom it was communicated by the hero himself, and afterwards confirmed by Mr. Harness, who was one of the expedition. The time of the incident was about 1790.

"No Indian depredations had recently occurred in the vicinity of Clarksburg, and the inhabitants began to congratulate themselves that difficulties were finally at an end.

"One night a man hearing the fence of a small lot, he had a horse in, fall, jumped up and running out saw an Indian spring on the horse and dash off. The whole settlement was alarmed in an hour or two, a company of twenty-five or thirty men were paraded, ready to start by daylight. They took a circle outside of the settlement, and soon found the trail of apparently eight or ten horses, and they supposed, about that many Indians. The captain (chosen before Hughes joined the company) called a halt, and held a council to determine in what manner to pursue them. The captain and a majority of the company were for following on their trail: Hughes was opposed, and he said he could pilot them to the spot where the Indians would cross the Ohio, by a nearer way than the enemy could go, and if they reached there before the Indians, could intercept them and be sure of success. But the commander insisted on pursuing the trail. Hughes then tried another argument: he pointed out the danger of trailing the Indians: insisted that they would waylay their trail, in order to know if they were pursued, and would choose a situation where they could shoot two or three and set them at defiance; and alarming the others, the Indians would out-travel them and make their escape. The commander found that Hughes was like to get a majority for his plan, in which event he (the captain) would lose the honor of planning the expedition. Hughes, by some, was considered too wild for the command, and it was nothing but jealousy that kept him from it, for in most of the Indian excursions, he got the honor of the best plan, or did the best act that was performed. The commander then broke up the council by calling aloud to the men to follow him and let the cowards go home, and dashed off full speed, the men all following. Hughes knew the captain's remark was intended for him, and felt the insult in the highest degree, but followed on with the rest. They had not gone many miles until the trail ran down a ravine where the ridge on one side was very steep, with a ledge of rock for a considerable distance. On the top of this cliff two Indians lay in ambush, and when the company got opposite they made a noise of some kind, that caused the men to stop: that instant two of the company were shot and mortally wounded. They now found Hughes' prediction fully verified, for they had to ride so far round before they could get up the cliff, that the Indians with ease made their escape.

"They all now agreed that Hughes' plan was the best, and urged him to pilot them to the river where the Indians would cross. He agreed to do it; but was afraid it might be too late, for the Indians knew that they were pursued and would make a desperate push. After leaving some of the company to take care of the wounded men, they put off for the Ohio river, at the nearest point, and got there the next day shortly after the Indians had crossed. The water was still muddy,



and the rafts that they crossed on were floating down the opposite shore. The men were now unanimous for returning home. Hughes soon got satisfaction for the insult the captain had given him: he said he wanted to find out who the cowards were; that if any of them would go, he would cross the river and scalp some of the Indians. They all refused. He then said if one man would go with him, he would undertake it; but none would consent. Hughes then said *he* would go and take one of their scalps, or leave his own.

"The company now started home, and Hughes went up the river three or four miles, keeping out of sight of it, for he expected the Indians were watching them to see if they would cross. He there made a raft, crossed the river, and encamped for the night. The next day he found their trail, and pursued it very cautiously, and about ten miles from the Ohio found their camp. There was but one Indian in it, the rest were out hunting. The Indian left to keep camp, in order to pass away the time, got to playing the fiddle on some bones that they had for the purpose. Hughes crept up and shot him, took his scalp and made the best of his way home.

"The following characteristic anecdote goes far to illustrate the great discernment and instantaneous arrangement of plans of this shrewd and skillful Virginia hunter.

"It is a general belief that the Indian is exceedingly cunning; unrivalled in the peculiar knowledge of the woods, and capable, by the extraordinary imitative faculties which he possesses, to deceive either man, beast or fowl. This is true to a certain extent; but still, with all his natural sagacity and quick perception of a native woodman, the Indian warrior falls short of the acquired knowledge of a well trained hunter, as the following case serves to illustrate. Jesse Hughes was more than a match at any time for the most wary savage in the forest. In his ability to anticipate all their artifices, he had but few equals, and fewer still, superiors. But, to the incident.

"At a time of great danger from the incursions of the Indians, when the citizens of the neighborhood were in a fort at Clarksburg, Hughes one morning, observed a lad very intently fixing his gun. 'Jim', said he, 'what are you doing that for?' 'I am going to shoot a turkey that I hear gobbling on the hillside,' said Jim. 'I hear no turkey,' said the other. 'Listen,' said Jim: 'there, didn't you hear it? Listen again.' 'Well,' says Hughes, after hearing it repeated, 'I'll go and kill it.' 'No you won't,' said the boy, 'it is my turkey; I heard it first.' 'Well,' said Hughes, 'but you know I am the best shot. I'll go and kill it, and give you the turkey.' The lad demurred but at length agreed. Hughes went out of the fort on the side that was farthest from the supposed turkey, and passing along the river, went up a ravine and cautiously creeping through the bushes behind the spot, came in whence the cries issued, and, as he expected, espied a large Indian sitting on a chestnut stump, surrounded by sprouts, gobbling, and watching if any one would come from the fort to kill the turkey. Hughes shot him before the Indian knew of his approach, took off the scalp, and went into the fort, where Jim was waiting for his prize. 'There now,' says Jim, 'you have let the turkey go. I would have killed it if I had gone.' 'No,' says Hughes, 'I didn't let it go; and, taking out the scalp, threw it down. 'There take your turkey, Jim, I don't want it.' The lad was overcome, and nearly fainted to think of the certain death he had escaped, purely by the keen perception and good management of Jesse Hughes.' (1)

(1) See page 420.

"Jesse Hughes, as we have already stated, was often of invaluable service to the settlements along the upper Monongahela, by advising them of the approach of Indians. On one occasion, a considerable body of the common enemy attacked a fort near Clarksburg, and but for the energy and fearlessness of Hughes might have reduced the frail structure, and massacred every one within it. This daring man boldly went forth for succor, and succeeded in reaching a neighboring station in safety. Immediately a company of men left to relieve the besieged, when the Indians, fearing the superior numbers, retreated in haste. (2)

"Hughes' scouting expeditions were not always confined to the extreme upper regions of the Monongahela. He often visited the stations lower down, and spent much of his time at Prickett's fort, also at the stockade where Morgantown now stands, and many other settlements in the neighborhood. He was a great favorite, and no scouting party could be complete, unless Jesse Hughes had something to do with it. We regret that our limits will not allow us to give more incidents in his very eventful life."

Mr. Luther Haymond, who is still living at Clarksburg, says that William Powers, while on his death-bed, told him that the incident of Hughes and the turkey never occurred at Clarksburg; that he knew the settlement from the beginning, and that the story was a mistake. Powers had an impression that he had heard a similar story as occurring east of the mountains. Mr. Haymond says that Powers was well posted on events happening on the frontier after his arrival.

Mr. James Stanley Gandee, a son of Jesse's daughter Massie, often heard both his mother and his Aunt Rachel Cottrell tell the Hughes turkey story. There never was any doubt about its authenticity. As related by them, the occurrence was substantially the same as recorded by *DeHass*, but the place was West's Fort, instead of Clarksburg. The lad who first heard the turkey and who was preparing to go shoot it, was James Tanner, a brother to Jesse's wife, and was then some fourteen or fifteen years of age.

I was told by Mrs. Mary Straley, of Hacker's Creek, who had known Jesse Hughes and some of his family, that the boy who figured in the turkey story was Jim McCullough. Mrs. Straley seemed to have no doubts regarding the credibility of the story, but did not state where it occurred. She was well informed on the early history of the Hacker's Creek settlement, and was a woman of high integrity.

It must be borne in mind that Jesse Hughes never took up a residence at Clarksburg, although he spent much of his time about the fort there. His scouting expeditions extended all over the Virginia border and western Pennsylvania.

(2) See page 421.



That William Powers should have heard a similar story east of the mountains cannot militate against the authenticity of the Hughes' story. Border lore abounds in such incidents. (3)

J. Lewis Peyton (4) gives the following on Jesse Hughes, evidently epitomized from *DeHass*:

"One of the most active, daring and successful Indian hunters in the mountain region of Virginia was Jesse Hughes—sometimes styled the Wetzels of his portion of the State. He was born on the headwaters of the Monongahela, Va., about 1768, and early became skilled in the use of the rifle and tomahawk. He was a man of iron constitution, and could endure extraordinary privations and fatigue. Many anecdotes are told of his encounters with the red men and of the invaluable services he rendered to the white settlements on the Monongahela. Jesse Hughes was more than a match at any time for the most wary savage in the forest. In his ability to anticipate all their artifices, he had few equals and no superiors. He was a great favorite, and no scouting party could be complete unless Jesse Hughes had something to do with it."

Jesse Hughes is mentioned frequently in *Withers' Chronicles of Border Warfare*, referred to hereinbefore, and which will be duly noticed in the course of this history.

## CHAPTER IV

In *Doniphan's Expedition*, by William E. Connelley, there is a biographical sketch of Colonel John Taylor Hughes, a member of the expedition of Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan in the Mexican War. Colonel Hughes became the historian of the expedition. He was a gallant soldier, and was killed at the battle of Independence, Missouri, in the Civil War. Of Colonel Hughes, the biographical sketch says:

"His father was Samuel Swan Hughes, the descendant of Stephen Hughes and his wife Elizabeth Tarlton Hughes. Stephen Hughes came to Maryland from Wales, probably from Carnarvonshire, but possibly from Glamorganshire. The date of his arrival in America has not been preserved. His son Absalom moved to Powhatan County, Virginia, where he intermarried with the daughter of a planter whose name was also Hughes, and whose Christian name was either David or Jesse—most probably Jesse. He lived on Hughes Creek, in that county, and was a man of character and influence; many of his descendants live yet in Virginia and West Virginia, and some of them live in other parts of the United States. Joseph, the son of Absalom Hughes, married Sarah Swan. He moved to Kentucky about the year 1790, and settled in Woodford County. There his son, Samuel Swan Hughes, married Nancy Price, daughter of Colonel William Price, a Virginia soldier of the Revolution."

Jesse Hughes, who lived on the stream then known as Hughes Creek, in Powhatan County, Virginia, was related by blood to Stephen Hughes, and had preceded him from Wales to America. The Hughes and Swan families were pioneer families in Virginia, and in their migrations they kept well together, members of them often intermarrying. And from the intermarriage of Stephen Hughes with his kinswoman, the daughter of Jesse Hughes, in Powhatan County, Virginia, Jesse Hughes, the famous pioneer and woodsman of Western Virginia, was probably descended. (1)

The date of the birth of Jesse Hughes is not known to be of record, and cannot be fixed with accuracy; and the place is also uncertain. *DeHass* and *Peyton* agree as to the place; but *Peyton* alone gives the date. Evidently they are both in error. The citation heretofore made to the work of *Withers* shows that Jesse Hughes was an active hunter in the Buckhannon settlement in 1769. This was the first permanent settlement established on the waters of the upper Monongahela, and we find him there but

(1) See page 421.

(3) See page 421. (4) p. 421.



one year later than the date given by *Pryton* as that of his birth. It is well nigh impossible that he should have been born on the waters of the Monongahela. The Blue Ridge marked the western frontier of Virginia as late as 1763. (2) The few settlements scattered beyond that boundary towards the Ohio, the westernmost of which was on Looney Creek, a tributary of the James, (3) were not permanent, and were almost all destroyed by the conspiracy of Pontiac.

Jesse Hughes was born about the year 1750. It might have been a year earlier or later, though it is not probable that it could vary a year either way from that date. As to the place of his birth, the evidence at hand indicates that it was east of the Alle-



HUGHES  
COAT OF ARMS

gheny Mountains, perhaps on the waters of the Wappatomaka of the Potomac. Susan Turner Hughes, the widow of George W. Hughes, a descendant of Jesse Hughes, told William E. Connelley, October 6, 1902, at Henry, Grant County, West Virginia, that: "Old Jesse Hughes was born right over here on Jackson's River, close to the Greenbrier county-line. I have passed the place myself, in company with my husband, who pointed out the place, which is in a fine river bottom. He was born in the winter, and the wolves were starving in the woods because of the deep snow. The night he was born they came into the yard and fought the dogs and ran them under the house and fought them there, and were only driven out by burning gunpowder on the hearth." Mrs. Hughes could not give the date of his birth, but said he was "A right smart chunk of a lad at the time of Braddock's battle."

If Mrs. Hughes was right, Jesse Hughes must have been born in Allegheny County, Virginia. Complete reliance cannot, however, be placed upon the information given by her; for some things which she related of Jesse Hughes, while they may be the local traditions of the country, could not be reconciled with known facts. Her description of the man and his cruel and bloodthirsty course towards the Indians coincides perfectly with what is known to be true. She said: "Old Jesse Hughes had eyes like a painter [panther] and could see at night almost as well as one." He could hear the slightest noise made in the forest at a great distance,

(2) See page 422. (3) p. 422.

and he was always disturbed by any noise he could not account for. He knew the ways of every animal and bird in the woods, and was familiar with the sounds and cries made by them. Any unusual cry or action of an animal or bird, or any note or sound of alarm made by either, caused him to stop and look about until he knew the cause. He could go through the woods, walking or running, without making any noise, unless the leaves were very dry, and then he made very little. He was as stealthy and noiseless as a painter, and could creep up on a deer without causing it any fright. And he could outrun any Indian that ever prowled the forest. He was as savage as a wolf, and he liked to kill an Indian better than to eat his dinner."

If Jesse Hughes was born on Jackson's River, the shiftings common on the disturbed border must have caused his parents to move to the Wappatomaka settlements, for he came into western Virginia with hunters from that region. Thomas Hughes, who was killed on Hacker's Creek by the Indians in April, 1778, (4) was Jesse's father; but no record or tradition indicating that he had settled on this stream, has ever been found. In 1781 a certificate was granted "Edmund West, assignee to Thomas Hughes, Senr., 400 acres on Sicamore Lick run, a branch of the West Fork [Harrison County] opposite Thomas Heughs [Hughes] Junr's land, to include his settlement made in 1773, with a pre-emption to 1,000 acres adjoining." This is the earliest record that I have found regarding the settling of Thomas Hughes, Sr., on the upper Monongahela waters. With some of the Radcliffs he settled on Elk Creek near Clarksburg, and his family still resided there in the fall of 1793. A family tradition has it that when the Indians ambushed and killed their father, who was then "quite old and bald-headed," Jesse and Elias solemnly pledged themselves "to kill Injuns as long as they lived and could see to kill them." Most terribly was that awful pledge redeemed. It will be seen, however, that both had killed Indians before the tragic death of their father, which event intensified, if possible, their hatred of the Indians, but was not the cause in which this hatred originated. (5)

I have not been able to find any printed record showing that Jesse Hughes was an enrolled Spy or Ranger on the border.

An inquiry to the Bureau of Pensions, Washington, D. C., elicited the reply that "a careful search of the Revolutionary War

(4) See page 422. (5) p. 424.



pension rolls fails to show a claim for any Jesse Hughes other than Survivor's File No. 9594." This was the Jesse Hughes, of Fluvanna County, Virginia, mentioned further on in this chapter.

Jesse Hughes, the scout, died prior to the Act of Congress, June 4, 1832, pensioning the soldiers of the Revolution, and if his services were pensionable, his widow, who survived him several years, never applied for same.

An inquiry made to the War Department failed to disclose any record of military enlistment by our Jesse Hughes. This, however, is true of others who were contemporary with Jesse, and who were known to have regularly enlisted in some branch of the military.

To a like inquiry to the Virginia State Library, Richmond, came the responses that, "neither the Muster Rolls of the State troops, nor the claims for Bounty Lands of that period, contain any record of the Jesse Hughes in question."

The Thomas Hughes who accompanied Pringle's Band of settlers to the Buckhannon, in 1769, was Jesse's younger brother, born about 1754. His inordinate passion for sport and adventure lured him to this Eldorado of the hunter. He afterwards settled on the West Fork River, and was the same Thomas Hughes whom we find on Hacker's Creek, and who hastened to the rescue of the Flesher family when they were attacked by the Indians in 1784, near where the town of Weston (6) now stands.

The homestead register of Monongalia County shows that in 1781, Thomas Hughes was granted a certificate for "400 acres on the West Fork, adjoining lands of Elias Hughes, to include his settlement made in 1773." The records of 1780 show that Thomas Hughes assigned to Thomas John (?) his claim to 250 acres on Ten Mile Creek (Harrison County), "to include his settlement made in the year 1772." Whether this assignor was the senior or junior Thomas Hughes, is not known, but the logical inference is that it was the latter. The date of the assignment is not of record.

Although Thomas Hughes, Jr., was one of the most capable and persistent scouts on the Virginia frontier, the only reference that we find to him in history, is his connection with the Flesher occurrence in 1784.

In 1833 or 1834, Hughes applied for a pension, and we have a glimpse of his border life in the meagre record preserved in the

(6) See page 424.

Government Pension Office at Washington. Hughes was illiterate and his name always appears with the customary "X." His original application, or declaration with accompanying papers, has been destroyed, but from the fragmentary record we learn that he was a resident on the West Fork of the Monongahela in 1774, and from that year until 1779 he was, every year, actively engaged in scouting from the West Fork to the Ohio River, under Captain William Lowther. His consummate skill in woodcraft, his bravery and caution, soon won for him a subaltern leadership. He was subsequently commissioned a Lieutenant of Indian Spies in Capt. Lowther's Company, a trust he did not resign until the spring of 1784. After this, he continued on ranging excursions to the different forts until the close of the Indian War in 1795. During this service, he was stationed at West's Fort, and at Richards' Fort on the West Fork.

In 1780, Lieutenant Hughes was riding a pathway about midway between the West and Richards' Forts, when he discovered an Indian mounted on a horse, recognized to be that of Adam O'Brien's. (7) The Lieutenant sprang from his horse and fired at the Indian wounding him, when he fled. Hughes was determined if possible to recapture the stolen horse, and in company with Alexander West pursued the Indian, tracking him by the blood. They found the tracks of several Indians, but lost the trail entirely at the West Fork River. It was supposed that the wounded Indian, perhaps dying, had been sunk in the river by his comrades.

In the affidavit of John Cartwright (Cutright), who in 1834 testified for Hughes, it would appear that Hughes was in some regular military expedition against the Indians, from which he returned in 1784. Cutright declares that after this, although he was stationed at the Buckhannon Fort, he and Hughes went spying and ranging together until 1795, and that Lieutenant Hughes lost much property through Indians.

William Powers, Alexander West and Adam Flesher also testified for Hughes in his claim for pension, while John McWhorter, J. P., vouched for the integrity of these witnesses.

W. G. Singleton, Special Pension Agent, who investigated Hughes' claim for pension, reported under date of January 2nd, 1835, "I understand from Hughes' Agent, James M. Camp, that his (Hughes) mind is entirely gone, and from other sources that

(7) See page 424



he is a maniac and has been confined for years. Christopher Nutter, William Powers and others tell me that he did good service, but was in no regular service, so therefore is not entitled to pension." Hughes was refused a pension on the grounds that his service was rendered in the Indian Wars, and not in the War of the Revolution. (8)

The munificence of an appreciative and "grateful country" is pitifully portrayed in its sentiment toward this time-wrecked veteran of twenty years of incessant warfare. As a scout Lieutenant Thomas Hughes was surpassed only by his two renowned brothers. The life of the wilderness spy was arduous, and fraught with constant danger. His wages were meagre (9) and those who were thus employed throughout the long border wars, seldom laid up a sustenance for old age.

Lieutenant Hughes died in October, 1837, in Jackson County, West Virginia, where he moved, perhaps, soon after the treaty of Greenville in 1795. Mrs. Hughes died three months previous to the death of her husband. They left only one child, Thomas, whom it appears was still living in 1854, aged seventy-one years.

There is no family tradition that connects Charles Hughes (10) who was engaged in the repulse of the Indians at West's Fort on Hacker's Creek in 1778, with the family of Jesse Hughes, though they were together in that engagement. It is quite probable that two Hughes families, closely related, were represented in the pioneers who settled on Hacker's Creek, and the name seems to have disappeared from the settlement in that beautiful valley at an early date.

In 1781, a certificate was granted "William McCleery, assignee to James Hughes, for 400 acres on Spring Creek [tributary to the Little Kanawha] to include his settlement made in 1774." I know nothing of the antecedents of this James Hughes.

In an early day one Edward Hughes, then a boy, came with some men from the Greenbrier settlements to the mouth of Morris Creek, since known as Hughes Creek, on the Great Kanawha. I know nothing of this lad's parentage. He seems to have been the only one of the name who came from Greenbrier with the party, who apparently were hunters. They built a small fort on a cliff by the creek, where they could reach the water by letting down a gourd with a grapevine. The boy experienced many hardships. At one time he was left alone for several days at the fort,

(8) See page 424. (9) p. 425. (10) p. 425.

and subsisted on parched corn, and a few fish that he caught in the creek. He was captured by the Indians while fishing on Peters Creek, a tributary of the Gauley River, now in Nicholas County, and was carried to the Indian towns on the Muskingum. He remained with his captors for more than two years, during which time he learned their language. He ascertained that the Great Kanawha joined the Ohio somewhere below where they then were, and determined to escape. He secreted a quantity of dried venison, and waited for a full moon. He then fled to the Ohio River, where he constructed a raft of dry timber, and floated down to the mouth of the Great Kanawha. During the voyage he never approached the shore, but when tired nature demanded a rest, he anchored his raft in mid-stream with a stone attached to a grape-vine.

He abandoned his raft, and following up the Kanawha, and after much suffering reached the little fort on the cliff. When he left the Indians he took with him a coat neatly made from a bear skin. The fore-legs formed the arms, and the neck and head formed the collar and head-covering. It was soft, pliable, and comfortable in the most stormy weather. Edward Hughes married and settled near where Summersville, in Nicholas County, now is. He never used intoxicants, and was devotedly Christian. He was buried on the mountain side, overlooking the site of the little fort in which he had spent so many of his solitary days. (11)

In 1770, a Thomas Hughes, born in 1753, and who married Elizabeth Swan, settled on the west side of the Monongahela, near the mouth of Muddy Creek, (12) now Carmichaels, Green County, Pa.; but he was of another family, though perhaps a blood relation of Jesse's father. Thomas Hughes, of Carmichaels, had a brother John, who was a Captain of the Pennsylvania Rangers during the Revolution. He was killed by the Indians near Louisville, Kentucky, in 1780. This family also hailed from Virginia.

A Thomas Hughes resided in now Kanawha County, West Virginia, in 1791.

A Thomas Hughes was Paymaster of the 7th Virginia Regiment from January 1, 1777, to May 1, 1778. He received a military land bounty in 1783.

It may be of interest to note that the Jesse Hughes of Fluvanna County, Virginia, previously referred to, in the spring of 1776,

(11) See page 425. (12) p. 425.



at the age of twenty, enlisted as a private in Roger Thompson's company of minute men, which was attached to Meredith's Regiment in eastern Virginia, and then to Morgan's riflemen in western Virginia. In the fall of 1776, Hughes enlisted in William Pierce's Company of Harrison's artillery. He fought at Monmouth and Newport, was stationed at Providence, and was discharged in 1779. He volunteered as a lieutenant in Joseph Hayden's Company in 1780 and was at the battle of Camden. In 1781 he was drafted as a lieutenant of militia, but was seized with smallpox and did not join the army until the day after Cornwallis' surrender. He was, no doubt, closely related to the ancestors of Jesse Hughes of pioneer fame, for the locality from which he enlisted is very near the ancestral home of the Hughes family.

The Muster Rolls in the War Department at Washington show that one Jesse Hughes served as a matross in Captain William Pierce's Company, First Artillery Regiment, Continental Troops, commanded by Colonel Charles Harrison. He was enlisted December 31, 1776, for three years, and was discharged December 20, 1779. Neither his residence nor the place of his enlistment is of record. This matross was the Jesse Hughes of Fluvanna County. In 1837, he was allowed a Bounty Land Warrant for three years' service as private in Continental line. The First Continental Artillery Regiment was assigned to the State of Virginia by Act of Congress approved October 3, 1780.

In 1778, a Jesse Hughes, a matross in Col. Charles Harrison's Virginia and Maryland Regiment of Artillery, Company No. 1, was returned as "sick in Virginia," along with Sergeant John Hughes of the same company. (13) There were several other Hughes among the Virginia troops, but they have no place in this story.

John Hughes, of Lancaster, Pa., under date of July 11, 1763, wrote to Colonel Bouquet an elaborate and detestable plan for hunting down the Indians with savage dogs, in the true Spanish way. (14) While this man was perhaps no relation to our hero, the two would probably have been in complete accord on the manner of procedure in dealing with the Indian question.

In 1770 or 1771, Jesse Hughes was married to Miss Grace Tanner, and settled on Hacker's Creek, about one mile above where West's Fort was afterwards built, and at the mouth of a

(13) See page 425. (14) p. 425.

stream which has since been known as Jesse's Run. Here he built his cabin on the site of an old Shawnee village. This was embraced in a homestead certificate, issued in 1781 to "Jesse Hughes for 400 acres on Hacker's Creek, adjoining lands of Edmund West to include his settlement made in 1770." (15)

In this lonely cabin, standing, as it did, on the western outskirts of the most western (16) and remote settlement on the Virginia frontier, this young couple experienced many thrilling adventures incident to border life in the virgin wilderness. The wife possessed the sterling qualities of rugged and noble womanhood. Endowed with that fearlessness and energy of character which a life of constant peril on the border engendered, she was admirably fitted for the companionship of her half-wild, yet renowned husband, whose savage temper was not conducive to domestic happiness. It was in this cabin that they had a thrilling experience with a rattlesnake.

One night Jesse was awakened from a sound sleep by feeling a living creature trying to work its way upward between his throat and the close-fitting collar of his homespun shirt. The contact of a cold, whip-like body with his own, caused him to suspect instantly the nature of his bed-fellow, and fully aroused him to a sense of his danger. With that rare self-control and presence of mind that served him so well in more than one instance of deadly peril, he softly spoke to his wife, waking, and telling her of the threatened danger, and directing her to get out of bed with their child, and remove the bed-clothing. This she did so gently that the restless intruder, who was still endeavoring to force its broad flat head under the obdurate shirt-collar, was not disturbed. The covering removed, with a single lightning-like movement, Jesse bounded to the floor several feet away. A huge yellow rattlesnake fell at his feet. With an angry whir-r-r-r it threw itself into the attitude of battle, but was soon dispatched. The next morning Jesse went prospecting for snakes, and found in the end of a hollow log which was built into his cabin, five copperheads and one rattlesnake. (17)

From his advent into the Buckhannon settlement in 1769 to the year 1778, we find no mention of the name of Jesse Hughes in border annals.

But it is not to be supposed that so restless and daring a man would remain inactive while such scenes of bloodshed were being

(15) See page 425. (16) p. 426. (17) p. 427.



enacted about him. His insatiate passion for Indian blood precludes this idea, and investigation proves the fallacy and adds strength to the statement of Mr. Bond, that the chronicle of *Withers* is but a partial and fragmentary history.

While living on Hacker's Creek, and within rifle-shot of his own door, Jesse consummated a deed, which, for needless and unprovoked treachery, was scarcely surpassed by the Indians in all their ravages of the Virginia border. He arranged a meeting with a friendly Indian for the ostensible purpose of spending a day in hunting. To reach the place of rendezvous the Indian had to cross Hacker's on a "foot-log," a tree felled across the stream to form a means of crossing. The time of meeting was appointed for an hour when the sun should reach a certain point above the tree-tops. Long before that time Jesse stealthily repaired to the spot and concealed himself in a position which commanded an unobstructed view of the foot-log, and there awaited the coming of his unsuspecting victim. At the appointed hour the Indian issued from the deep tangle of the valley forest. An eye gleamed along the barrel of the deadly rifle, the Indian reached the middle of the log, a report of the rifle reverberated through the valley, and the lifeless body of the Indian fell forward into the stream.

Hughes claimed that the Indian approached in a suspicious manner, wary and watchful, and that he felt justified in killing him. It is not at all probable that an Indian brought up amid the dangers of the wilderness, would traverse a forest path other than with every faculty alert to hidden danger. His very training would preclude this and his caution was no evidence that he intended treachery. Had he meditated evil, he would more likely have followed the course pursued by Hughes.

Not only did Hughes engage in Indian killings not chronicled by *Withers*, but he was a leader in the terrible massacre of the Bulltown Indians, an account of which must form a separate chapter of this narrative.

## CHAPTER V

At no very remote period prior to the advent of the white man into the Trans-Allegheny region, Hacker's Creek had been the seat of an Indian population of no mean magnitude. Indeed the evidence of a very ancient occupation of this valley by man is not wanting. In the present work it is impossible to enter as deeply into this interesting subject as would be desired, or as personal observation might warrant; but as it is expedient that the reader have some idea of the condition of this valley in its primitive state, brief mention on the most salient points of what is known on the subject will be made here.

About the year 1896, Samuel Alkire, a great-grandson of Jesse Hughes, in the line of his daughter Martha, excavated a well for stock-water on his home farm some three miles below the village of Berlin. The well was dug in a broad, sloping draw, near the base of the hill bordering on the right of the valley. At the depth of twenty feet the workman, Charley Tenny, of Jane Lew, came upon a perfectly sound and well preserved spruce, or pine pole, to which some of the bark still adhered. This pole, about three feet in length, was firmly imbedded in a strata of blue clay, and with it was a quantity of pine cones, twigs and other debris of the forest, which, at some remote period, had been lodged there by the action of water. In removing the pole from its bed the workman, with his mattock, severed it near the middle. Mr. Alkire was present and saw the pole and cones taken out. One fragment was claimed by Mr. Tenny, but the other, together with several of the cones, was carefully preserved by Mr. Alkire, who believed them of scientific value. These he kindly placed at my disposal, and upon examining the timber, was astounded to find that it showed several distinct and well-defined knots where small limbs had been severed with some kind of cutting tool. These protuberances were smoothly trimmed and of uniform ridge-shape, like that produced by severing a limb with sloping cuts from two opposite sides. The end showed similar cuts where it had been dis-severed in much the same way. It was impossible without the aid of a glass to determine the character of the incisions; whether made by a flint or a steel implement. Yet, owing to the texture

of the wood in a young growth of this kind, time and other potent factors would have a tendency to smooth away and obliterate any slight irregularity or uneven surface left by the edged tool; or they may have been polished away by the ancient artisan; in which case a glass would have proved of little or no value in determining the primary nature of the marks in question. Be this as it may, it is unfortunate that within a few hours after this very interesting relic came into my possession, and before it could be given a crucial examination, it fell into the hands of some thoughtless boys who forever destroyed its archaeological value by whittling away every vestige of the traces left by the cutting implement of the unknown workman. The pole was partly carbonized and hardened; and was flattened to an oval shape, attesting to both age and the enormous pressure to which it had been subjected. When first found it was about the size of the fore-arm, but in drying had shrunk to nearly half its original size.

Owing to the location of this draw, where naturally we should expect a rapid accumulation of drift and soil washed from the hillside by every rain, the depth at which these objects were found would have slight weight in computing their age. But the fact that nowhere in this valley or its tributaries does there grow pine timber of any kind, nor does there exist any evidence that such trees ever did grow there, makes this find important. The mere finding of the limb would in itself signify little, as it might have been transported from other regions in quite recent times; but the discovery of pine cones in quantity, evidently washed there from a forest growing contiguous, is indeed puzzling. It is vain to speculate as to the time required for the passing of one variety of forest trees and the production of an entirely different species in its place, even if such was the case in this instance. Are we to take the discovery of this mysterious relic with its interesting surroundings as proof that in this valley man antedated, by vast ages, the primitive forest with which it was so densely clothed when the white man first set foot in its sylvan beauty? Or shall we accept Mr. Alkire's humorous solution of the riddle — "that some old codger, living here at some time, had planted evergreen shade trees about his domicile, and had trimmed a branch from one of them for a bean-pole, and that the well had been sunk in the old man's bean-patch." This theory would appear as logical and rational as those often advanced by archaeologists in support

of their pet hobbies. Let the deduction be as it may, importance is attached to the discovery, and the loss of the relic is greatly deplored. Facts outweigh theory, and quite often what seems of no consequence proves of greatest value to the archaeologist in arriving at truth. But sometimes objects of recent origin are found under circumstances indicating great antiquity.

On Kinchelo Creek, Lewis County, West Virginia, several years ago in sinking a well, a fragment of pine board having wrought-iron nails driven into it was found at a depth of twenty-one feet from the surface. The location of this well was not at the foot of a hill or near any existing water-way, where a rapid burial would be insured by either landslides or the accumulation of flood sediment. How it came there is a mystery. I examined a fragment of this relic, and certainly no one could claim for it a remote origin.

Nearly one hundred years ago, while a well was being sunk at the old Henry McWhorter cabin, then occupied by his son Thomas, on McKinney's Run, (1) two and one-half miles from Jane Lew, at a depth of six feet below the surface was found a six- or eight-pound solid-shot cannon ball. It is scarcely necessary to comment on the probable age or history of this find, further than to say that there was no military post in that region, and the early settlers possessed no artillery of any kind. The fact that the relic was found within one-half mile of the old Indian village site on the Davis farm would suggest that it had been carried there by Indians from some distant post prior to the settlement of the country. It is not known what became of the ball; it disappeared several years ago.

Scattered through the valley of Hacker's Creek and its tributaries are to be met evidences of former Indian occupation. On every hill and in every glen are found those mysteriously pitted "cup-stones" that have been given so much notice by archaeologists. In addition to the isolated graves and numerous ancient camps, the valley is dotted over with sites of old abandoned villages, with their contiguous burial grounds. Because of their superior location and the absence of timber, these village grounds, or "Indian fields," were favorite places for homes with the first settlers. In the main valley of Hacker's Creek there are no less than seven Indian village sites; and there is one on McKinney's Run, and one on Jesse's Run. That on Jesse's Run is not of very

(1) See page 427



great extent. The one on McKinney's Run is quite large and occupies a "flat" or second bottom. This old site is on the farm of Rev. Samuel Davis and in connection with it there is quite an extensive Indian burial ground. To secure this city of the dead from vandalism, Mr. Davis has planted a cherry tree on each separate grave.

Numerous stone relics have been picked up on this field. In an early day, Samuel Stalnaker discovered the skeleton of an Indian in the crevice of a small ledge of rock on the border of this field, and near a drain which flows between the Davis and the old McWhorter farms. The bones were never disturbed, and the spot has long since grown over with grass and obliterated. On a high point, or ridge, on the last named farm, two or three graves were found. One of them examined by my father, contained two skeletons, that of a very large man, and a girl about twelve years of age. Both were in sitting posture. The man's jaw had, several years previous to his death, been broken, but was neatly healed. No relics were found, and the remains were replaced, and the graves filled.

West's Fort, now the present site of the residence of Minor C. Hall, was once an Indian village. On a beautiful elevation, or second bottom, at the mouth of Jesse's Run, was an extensive village, and perhaps the very last in the valley that was occupied by the Indians. It was here, in a little dell which ran through this village ground, that Jesse Hughes built his cabin.

Another Indian village was located on a promontory-like flat, which extends out into the valley, on the farm of the late John Alkire. Here settled Samuel Bonnett, brother to John Bonnett who was killed on the Little Kanawha, hereafter noted. His old hewn-log house is still standing, though it is rapidly crumbling to decay. Just up the valley, on the opposite side of the creek, on a fine elevated bottom was another village of considerable proportions. Here can still be seen the remains of one of those mysterious earth-wall enclosures met with in the Ohio Valley. This earthwork, in former years, was reverently preserved by the then owner of the land, Mr. David Smith, who has been referred to elsewhere in this volume. When he transferred the title to other parties, with commendable sentiment he stipulated that this pre-historic work should never be desecrated or disturbed. But in time the estate fell into the hands of those whose sole

incentive was money, and as this ancient monument stood in the way of crops, it was sacrificed. Its encircling moat was filled with logs and its walls leveled by the plow. It was the most portentous aboriginal remains in the valley.

Near here stood "Miller's Fort," a strongly constructed dwelling, built near the close of Indian hostilities, and which never figured in the defense of the border. With no place in the annals, the structure lives in tradition only.

On an elevation south or southeast of where the village with its mysterious monument stood, is an Indian burial ground of considerable magnitude. In one of the graves opened there in 1890, was found a small fragment of bright blue home-spun woolen cloth, which had been interred with the dead body of the Indian. This points to the occupation of the valley within historic times, and a comparatively recent burial. Unfortunately, this cloth was lost. Another grave yielded a fine stone bird-head pipe, and a polished slate gorget; and another, a well-made celt, slightly damaged on the poll. In a grave which I opened and where "bundle burial" had been resorted to, there was found a clay pipe and a broken clay vessel with the usual rounded bottom, which contained the fragment of a turtle, or tortoise shell, brittle from decay, and evidently the remains of a food-offering to the dead. Both pipes are of ancient type.

Next comes the Indian village ground where John Hacker, the first settler on the creek, built his cabin. (2) It is the most



SITE OF JOHN HACKER'S RESIDENCE

Photographed 1910

*(Old well and foundation of chimney. (Modern barn in background.)*

(2) See page 427

beautiful section of the valley, and about one mile, or over, below the present village of Berlin.

Many interesting relics have been picked up in the "Indian fields" on the old Hacker farm. When a boy, I often rode horseback to a corn mill near this place, and soon learned to watch for "flints" along the clay banks of the road. The fragment of an engraved sandstone tablet, a fine "chungky" stone, and a small copper pendant were, among other things, in the hands of nearby farmers, who refused to part with them. Grooved stone relics were seldom met with in any part of the valley.

Marked traces of an aboriginal occupation are found on the high creek bottom, on the old Cozad farm, now occupied by Mr. George Lawson. Not only stone implements, but iron or steel tomahawks have been found there. This farm was made historic by an Indian raid in 1794. (3)

Several miles up the creek, just below the mouth of Rover's Run, (4) and where Mr. William Kelly now resides, was another Indian village. On a high ridge above this village, and contiguous to the valley, was a stone-heap, perhaps three by eight feet, eighteen inches high, and enclosed with a curbing of rude slabs of sandstone planted on edge. With Mr. T. A. Law, I examined this interesting stone-heap, and found a small bed of ashes one foot below the original surface, and near the center of the enclosure. In the ash-bed was a flint spear-head, which showed traces of the heat to which it had been subjected. Over the ash-bed was a sandstone slab about twelve inches square and one inch thick, which had been broken into fragments by the fire.

Two other curbed stone-heaps were examined, apparently of the same age and of about the same dimensions as the first described. One of these was on the ridge dividing Jesse's Run from Hacker's Creek, on the farm of George Goodwin, and contained nothing. The other was at Berlin, on the farm of Mr. E. H. Bonnett, on the "flat" just above the old Hebron Church. This one was carefully opened by Professor G. F. Queen, and yielded nothing save a few flint chips and some charcoal. Most of the stone of this mound had previously been removed and used in repairing the public road. At no other place in America have similar remains been found, and it is lamentable that they have not been preserved.

Far up the mountain on the left-hand side of Rover's Run,

(3) See page 427. (4) p. 427.

and adjacent to Bear Knob, several years prior to these investigations, I examined an interesting effigy-like figure of Indian origin. It consisted of a single boulder, weighing perhaps three hundred pounds, lying on the surface, with a short row of small stones extending not unlike the arms of a rude cross from about the middle on either side. The stones were removed and an excavation of six feet failed to reveal any sign that the earth had ever been disturbed. (5)

A few miles up the creek from where stood the village last mentioned, and on the farm of my maternal grandfather, the late John W. Marple, is the trace of an Indian habitation of extraordinary import. It occupies a second bottom on the right-hand side of the valley, at the mouth of a small run which flows down from the hills and enters the creek on the south. On the west looms Bear Knob seven hundred and fifty feet above this old village ground. Here can still be seen the outlines of a great ash-circle. It is perfect in contour, save on the northeast side, where gently sloping ground has caused the ashes to work down the incline and thus broaden the circle slightly. Where normal, it is one hundred and eighty feet in diameter. A belt of dark ashes sixty feet wide, encircles a clear inner space sixty feet in diameter. This circle was thickly strewn with fragments of bone, mussel shell, flint chips, scraps of pottery, perfect and broken arrow points and stone relics. I saw this field plowed during the '80s, at which time the measurements were made. The arrow points then secured were mostly of rude workmanship. The fragment of a "chunkey" stone was picked up; but not of the least historic import was the finding of a clay pipe stem, of Caucasian origin.

The field on which this ash-circle is located was cleared about the year 1821, by Mr. John Warner and a companion. It was then covered with a growth of young sugar-trees measuring some twelve inches in diameter; which would denote that the occupancy by the Indians had been comparatively recent. There were but two large trees on it, one a yellow poplar and the other a black walnut; each measuring five feet "across the stump." One stood in the north part of the field and the other in the south part. Both were outside of the circle. Mr. Warner informed me that when they cleared this "Indian Field," he could have picked up a bushel of broken arrow points, which were sometimes used as gun flints,

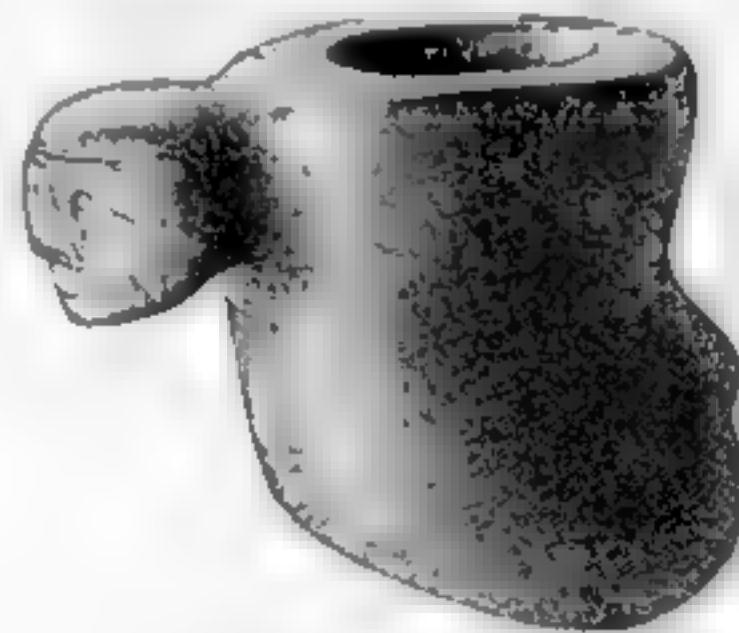
(5) See page 428.



and that the ground was literally covered with fragments of bone and mussel shell. Also that there were numerous remnants of stone implements, but not many in perfect condition. Pieces of pottery were abundant. Many years afterwards, among other things, he found in an adjoining field a finely carved stone pipe, slightly broken. The material was hard, compact, brown sandstone highly polished. It is not known what became of this pipe. Some forty years later a perfect steatite "banner stone," perforated, was plowed up near the same place.

Stone filled graves are found along the rocky base of the hill west of the "Indian Field," and near where these last relics were found. North of these graves, a small mound was located in the first bottom. This mound I opened in 1880; and a flint spear head, a broken arrow point, a small piece of steatite paint-stone and a single bit of charcoal was all that was obtained. These, with the "banner stone" and hundreds of other interesting relics were collected from the village sites and burial grounds of the Hacker's Creek Valley and various parts of the State. (6)

There is said to be an ash-circle similar to the one described, on Rooting Creek, a branch of Elk Creek, (7) only a few miles north. These circles are unusual in American, or Old World antiquities. Locally, they are associated with past strange religious rites and occult practices. (8)



ANCIENT STONE PIPE

Found in a ploughed field near Willow Grove, Jackson County, West Virginia. In the McWhorter Collection, Museum of Archives and History, Charleston, W. Va. See *The West Virginia Historical Magazine*, 1901, Vol. I, No. 4.

(6) See page 428. (7) p. 428. (8) p. 428.

## CHAPTER VI

The tradition that Tecumseh was born on Hacker's Creek, so briefly alluded to in a note supplied by me for the late edition of *Chronicles of Border Warfare*, is as follows:

Sometime after the Treaty of Greenville, so the story goes, Tecumseh was in the settlements of the Upper Monongahela and visited Hacker's Creek. While there, in a conversation with a Miss Mitchel, Tecumseh declared that he was born on this creek; either at the village where Jesse Hughes afterwards settled, or at the one where John Hacker, the pioneer, located. He was also authority for the statement that the Indian name for Hacker's Creek signified "muddy water." In Shawnee *wiya-kakami* is muddy water, as applied to a lake or pond; while *wiya-nipe* designates flowing muddy water, or river; and if Tecumseh was rightly reported, his tribe called this romantic stream *Wiya-nipe*. The same cognomen applies to the West Fork of the Monongahela, of which Hacker's Creek is an important tributary. Doubtless, the name, primarily, applied to the larger stream and extended to the smaller with some differentiating term.

Tecumseh was born about the year 1768, just one year preceding the Pringle colonization of the Upper Monongahela. The village at the mouth of Jesse's Run was occupied by Indians within historic times, as attested by the fact that brass buttons of an old style, and other objects of European manufacture, have been found intermixed with various Indian relics. After heavy rains large quantities of lead bullets have been picked up on a clay bank near where stood the cabin of Jesse Hughes. Tradition says that when the Indians wanted to clean their rifles they discharged them against this bank, or at marks placed there. The early settlers resorted thither for their lead. There is also a tradition that there resided near West's Fort, a hermit-like hunter who knew of a lead mine on a small stream that enters Hacker's Creek from the south, in what is now the Alkire settlement above the mouth of Jesse's Run. This grizzled nimrod obtained all the lead he required from this "mine," but he would never divulge its location to his fellow-countrymen. Dressed in buckskins and the traditional moccasins, his step was light and trackless. Cunning

as a fox, he was often traced to the high ridge south of the creek, where he would disappear. Later he would return with a supply of lead. (1) Traditions of lead mines were current in nearly every Virginia settlement. In all probability the mysterious hunter obtained his lead from some such source as the claybank deposit, and was loth to share his failing store with his neighbors.

It is known that the Ohio Indians frequented this region as hunters after the white settlers came, and it is not improbable



TECUMSEH—THE GREATEST OF SHAWNEES

*From a pencil sketch made about 1812. There is no true portrait of Chief Tecumseh in existence. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.*

that Tecumseh was born here while his people were on one of those excursions. *Drake* says that Tecumseh was born on the Scioto River, near where is now Chillicothe. (2) Other authorities state that he was born on Mad River, a few miles north of Old Chillicothe, claiming that his parents and relatives were on a hunting expedition at the time, and were encamped on Mad River. *Col. Hatch* contends that Tecumseh was born near the mouth of Clearwater, on the upper point of its junction with the Great Miami River. (3)

The Chillicothe, "Chi-la-ka-tha" one of the four divisions of the Shawnee tribe, (4) always occupied a village of the same name.

(1) See page 429. (2) p. 430. (3) p. 430. (4) p. 430.

As the Shawnees retreated westward before the whites, several villages of this name were successfully occupied. (5) To designate Tecumseh's birthplace as "Old Chillicothe" is misleading. There was an Old Chillicothe in each of the following counties in Ohio: — Ross, Pickaway, Clark, Green and Miami.

Old Chillicothe in Ross County, was the capitol of the Shawnees at the time of Tecumseh's birth, and it was evidently the home of his family. Such being the case, historians would suppose that he was born there; and in the absence of definite information, give that town the honor of his birthplace, though he may have been born at some distant and transient hunting camp. The Indians were, then, as they are now, accompanied by their women even when going to remote localities to hunt.

At the two villages on Hacker's Creek mentioned by Tecumseh, there have been found the stone cist graves believed to be of Shawnee origin. Such graves are located in the midst of, or contiguous to these village sites, while those constituting the burial grounds on the hillsides and the ridges, are the common stone-filled graves of a different tribe. The summit of Buck Knob (6) which overlooked the villages on McKinney's Run and at the mouth of Jesse's Run, is such a burial ground. Without entering into a discussion as to the probability of which of these tribes were the last to abandon a continuous occupancy of the valley, or whether they were contemporaneous, summing up the facts, I regard this claim of Hacker's Creek to the honor of being the birthplace of Tecumseh, supported as it is by his own statement, worthy of consideration and probably correct. Let Virginia then add to the long list of her warriors, patriots and statesmen, the name of Tecumseh; really Tikamthi, or Tecumtha, the "meteor" or "shooting-star;" the "crouching panther," "I cross the path, or way." Even if born at Old Chillicothe or on Mad River, Tecumseh was still a Virginian; for all that part of the territory Northwest of the Ohio River belonged to Virginia until after the Revolution.

There was a tradition on Hacker's Creek which declared that Tecumseh in one of his incursions into the valley, lost his pipe — usually an adjunct to the Indian Warrior's equipment — and with it much of his prestige as a war chief. He and his followers spent many moons in a fruitless search for the missing talisman. I remember that more than thirty years ago there was found on

(5) See page 430. (6) p. 432.



Jesse's Run a stone pipe of "strange and peculiar workmanship." This revived the old story of Tecumseh and his missing pipe; and many supposed that the pipe found was the one lost by this renowned chief. It is not known what became of the pipe.



A HACKER'S CREEK PAWPAW THICKET

Photographed September, 1914, by Master Joe Reger McWhorter

(*Fruit of the Gods.*)

Primitive Wiya-nipe must have been a veritable paradise for the red man. Beyond doubt it is today the garden spot of central West Virginia. It has a milder winter climate than the Buckhannon region and the high mountain sections of the State. The soil from the creek bed to the summit of the surrounding hills is generally fertile and productive. The first settlers found the valley clothed with a heavy growth of timber. Here the nut-producing varieties: — the chestnut, shell-bark hickory, black and white walnut, the beech and white oak, grew to perfection on both bottom and hillside. The fruit was of superior size and quality. The hazel nut grew in abundance, while the uplands were covered with the persimmon; the service, or june-berry; the black and red haw, the mulberry and wild cherry. Plums of a most excellent flavor flourished along the banks of every stream and favored localities of the higher altitudes. Crabapples were also plentiful. The less fertile portions of the ridges were covered with the shrubs of the wild gooseberry and the huckleberry, beneath which was often found patches of the aromatic winter-

green. On every variety of soil of the uplands grew mountain grapes of varied size and flavor; while the low marsh and swamp lands were canopied with a matted tangle of the fox grape, large and luscious. A small winter grape, rather acrid and less palatable, was also found on the lowlands. The pawpaw, the fruit of the gods, attained to perfection and superabundance in this valley of valleys. Blackberries, raspberries and elderberries flourished in open and fertile ground, usually among the fallen timber. Occasionally wild strawberries were met with on the high ridges and points where the timber was scattering; but they were not plentiful. The sugar tree, whose sweet-producing qualities were so universally made use of by the Indian, stood dark and thick over most of the bottom land and the rich north coves. Sassafras, and spice, the root-bark of the one and the twig of the other, used in preparing food drinks were plentiful. Medicinal barks and herbs were multitudinous. A fragrant variety of plant used in the preparation of kinnikinick, or Indian smoking tobacco, was in abundance. Its leaves, when brewed, produce a drink scarce inferior to the best of imported teas.

The forest teemed with all the game native to the Ohio Valley, while the waters swarmed with excellent fish, turtles, frogs and mussels. The following incident will illustrate the profusion of the finny tribe in this stream at the time of the settlement of the valley.

One evening Henry McWhorter, the pioneer millwright of West's Fort, and his two oldest boys, prepared faggots or torches from slivers of dry wood and went "fish-gigging." Walter, a small lad, having no gig, did not go with them. After they had gone, from a board he fashioned a rude paddle — a poor substitute for a gig — and taking a torch went into the ripple below the mill dam. He said afterwards that had the fish been stones he could have walked across the creek on them, so plentiful and of such good size were they. He soon secured all the fish that he could carry — more than was caught by his father and brothers.

Even at a much later date this creek afforded superior fishing grounds. Walter, when grown, and his son, my father, then a lad, went gigging below the bridge at Jane Lew. Walter was an expert at spearing fish and prided himself as such. He saw what he supposed was a "chunk" of water-soaked wood lying in the ripple and lightly set his gig on it as he was passing by. What

was his surprise and chagrin, when with a splash the supposed "chunk" flashed from under the spear and was off like a shot for deep water. The fisherman could never get over the loss of that fish, which he estimated to be not less than four feet in length.

Buffalo, elk, deer, bear and innumerable small game abounded throughout this region. One old hunter whom I remember seeing, declared that in traversing less than one mile of the dividing ridge between Bridge Run and the left-hand fork of Buckhannon Run, starting at the head of the latter stream, he secured five deer. Many are the tales of hunting adventures that have been handed down from the early settlers of this valley, and a few of them are here given.

Alexander West shot an elk on Hacker's Creek, but the shot did not prove fatal, and the elk made off. West followed, finding that the animal often lay down. His better plan would have been to let it lie, but he expected to find it dead. It continued to get up and travel, however, and West followed it to the present site of West Milford, on the West Fork River, where he killed it. He dressed the meat and hung it on trees out of the reach of wolves, and returned home. The next day he went with a pack horse and brought it in.

West was "coon hunting" on the right-hand fork of McKinney's Run, when his dogs engaged a bear down in a very deep hollow. West soon heard his favorite dog howling with pain, and like the true hunter he started at once to the rescue. With drawn knife he plunged into the depths of the narrow gorge, the sides of which reverberated with the fierce snarls and deep growls of the savage combatants. It was very dark, and West could distinguish nothing but a white spot on one of his dogs. He fearlessly approached the struggling mass and felt for the shaggy coat of the bear. Feeling along its side he located the fatal spot over the heart, and buried the long blade of his hunting-knife between its ribs, which ended the fray.

Bears frequently made forays upon the herds of swine belonging to the settlers. Knowing the fighting qualities of the full-grown boar, the pioneer always had one at the head of his herd. These long tusked savage brutes seldom came out of a battle with a bear with any serious injury. One night West heard a commotion among his hogs and went out to investigate. He found that a two-year-old bear had attacked the pigs, and in turn had been

set upon and killed by the old boar. The pigs were unhurt. Hogs were turned loose in the woods and were semi-wild, oftentimes entirely so and were very dangerous. When in defense of young broods, or molested when in bands, they would not hesitate to attack man; and frequently hunters and ginsengs experienced thrilling adventures with them.

West was a great hunter and often led the settlers in the annual hunts for the purpose of securing their winter's meat. On one of these occasions a company of several men went into the Mountains of Randolph County. The party pitched camp, and early in the hunt killed two fine elk. That night the "marrow-bones" were cut out and roasted for supper. After the repast and while sitting around the camp fire, one of the men in a spirit of hilarity, pulled a large tick from one of the dogs and wrapping it in a "wad" of tobacco, handed it to a companion, a large athletic fellow, "ter chaw." The unsuspecting victim did "chaw," but soon found that the "quid" contained something not altogether "terbacker." Upon learning the nature of the rude joke that had been played on him, he seized one of the heavy marrow-bones and would have brained the thoughtless joker, had not West interfered and prevented the fight.

Alexander West related an occurrence near his father's house on Hacker's Creek. Some boys one Sunday, stealing out an old musket, went in quest of adventure. In a nearby cornfield they shot and killed a bear. This bear was dressed and as usual, the meat divided among the settlers. Soon there was a savory "bear-pork" simmering over the glowing fires in the great open chimneys of more than one cabin home. The dogs gnawing at the offal, shook from the maw the mangled fingers of a human hand. Notice of the ghastly find was at once given out, and the partly-cooked meat thrown away. A search was instituted, and in another part of the field was found the half-eaten body of a man. All around was the evidence of a fearful conflict. Most of the corn on an acre of ground had been trampled down in a terrific life-and-death struggle. The victim was an eccentric fellow, of powerful build and strength, who often spent days and nights in the woods. On this occasion he had been absent several days but nothing was thought of it.

Of buffalo on Hacker's Creek, there is but one mention by



the early chroniclers. *Withers*, (7) in speaking of the first settlers on the Buckhannon River, and the stream in question, says:

"At the close of the working season of 1769 some of these adventurers, went to their families on the South Branch; and when they returned to gather their crops in the fall, found them entirely destroyed. In their absence the buffaloes, no longer awed by the presence of man, had trespassed on their enclosures, and eaten their corn to the ground—this delayed the removal of their families 'till the winter of 1770."

It has been noted in the preceding chapter that John Hacker, the first settler on the creek bearing his name, was one whose crop was destroyed. This occurred during his absence on the Wappatomaka for his family, and is history; but the sequel is tradition. There are few now living who have ever heard of Hacker's long pursuit of the destroyers of his sole means of bread; but the landmarks of that chase will remain indefinitely. I am indebted to Mr. John Strange Hall, of Walkersville, West Va., for the following account of the hunt, as given him in manuscript by Mr. Jackson Arnold, who got it direct from Hacker's children.

"As soon as Hacker had installed his family in their new home, with the usual equipment of a hunter he took up the trail of the buffaloes. It was a small herd, two full grown and a young calf. Buffalo and elk were not numerous on the upper waters of the Monongahela, and were never found in large droves. They, however, gave names to numerous licks and streams. (8)

"The band which Hacker followed, was moving leisurely south for the winter, and ranging up and down the streams. It consumed time to find the various crossings; hence the short marches and many camps made by the huntsman. All the waters crossed, or followed by trail, with the licks and camps were so accurately described that subsequent hunters easily recognized them. Hacker's first camp was at the mouth of (now) Curtis Run, a branch of Little Skin Creek, where he dined on a turkey. The second was 'Crane Camp,' on a tributary of the West Fork. Here in addition to the deer killed at a lick where the buffalo had halted, Hacker shot a crane; hence the name of camp and stream.

"The trail followed the right-hand branch of the river to its source, and Hacker was, so far as known, the first white man to look upon the upper waters of the Little Kanawha, known at its mouth as the first great tributary of the Ohio below Fort Pitt. In the glades above the falls of the creek, he met with more abun-

(7) See page 433. (8) p. 433.

dant and fresher signs of buffalo. In addition to the grass, the crab apples and thorn berries attracted the game.

"The third camp was noted for its durability. A rain storm coming up, the hunter sought shelter in a dry and comfortable cave in a cliff, where he again regaled himself on a fine turkey killed on the river bottom. This cave, or rock-shelter, has since been known as Hacker's Camp, and was subsequently occupied by hunters and ginseng diggers. The stream is known as Hacker's Branch.

"The fourth camp was at Buffalo Lick, where Hacker shot and crippled a buffalo cow. She had just come up from the lick where the others were, and all fled over a well-beaten path toward a gap in the mountain. The trail was followed but a short distance, when evening coming on, the hunter returned to the lick. It was at the source of a ravine, circular in form, rock bottom and about two rods in diameter. Several small springs issued from the bluffs, differing in taste, but none of them palatable. Here the sign of buffalo, elk and deer surpassed all that Hacker had ever seen. The brackish, or saline properties of the water allured the animals from a great distance.

"Buffalo Fork, an affluent of the Back Fork, or Right Fork of Little Kanawha, and Buffalo Lick are names given by Hacker. Following the trail through the gap, a scene of rugged grandeur opened to the hunter's view. A boisterous stream rushed through the deeply wooded canyon. From the trend of the mountains, he rightly conjectured that it did not belong to the system on which he had been traveling, which proved to be the Little Kanawha. He had dropped onto the waters of Elk, a tributary of the Great Kanawha.

"A few miles up the stream, the mountains receded, enclosing a beautiful valley. Here Hacker secured the cow previously wounded. She was standing in a clump of bushes near a lick. The sound of the rifle startled the others, now joined by another herd, and all fled towards the great Buffalo Lick at the forks of Elk River, which is now a noted health resort, the Webster Salt Sulphur Springs. The arduous chase was ended. The grim hunter's wrath was appeased and he prepared to return with the spoils. The robe was removed and a small amount of choice parts selected and cured by the fire to carry home as jerk.

"Hacker made a 'tomahawk-entry' at the lick where the

cow was killed, embracing the bottom land. For years it was known as Hacker's Lick, but in time the lick lost its value and now the locality with its village bears the name of Hacker's Valley. This is a branch of the Holly River, so named by Hacker from the groves of this evergreen which adorned its banks.

"The return trip was by short stages, the camps being at the mouth of Buffalo Fork, Crane Camp, and Little Skin Creek, at each of which Hacker made a 'tomahawk-entry.' The latter was the only one to which he secured a title. Here, early in the last century his son Jonathan became the first settler of Skin Creek. After several years he sold the place to Rev. John Hardman, and moved to Crane Camp. He soon learned that he had no title to the land, it being covered by a large patent. The abandoned cabin in the wilderness became the abode of spooks."

It is noteworthy that Mr. Hall places the removal of Hacker's family to their new home in the autumn of 1769. From all evidence this is correct, but it is very probable that they subsequently returned to the Wappatomaka, and that their permanent removal to Hacker's Creek was not until the following fall, or even later.

Hacker reported the existence of the artificial earth mounds at the mouth of Buffalo, where the village of Cleveland now stands in Webster County. There were ten or twelve of these, the largest in quite recent years measured about five feet in height and some twenty feet in diameter. He attributed them to Indian origin, which is doubtless correct. This pursuit of the buffalo stands unique, and has no rival in geographical discovery made in a single chase for game on the western waters. The incentive was revenge.

A pathetic story illustrative of the hardships incident to a life on the border has been handed down by the older settlers of this region. A few years after his settlement on Hacker's Creek, John Hacker returned to the Wappatomaka for salt and other necessary articles, and upon his departure for home his friends prepared provisions for his return journey. He saved some biscuits from his food and upon his arrival home gave one to his little boy, William, who was then about five years old. The child examined it closely and then began rolling it over the rough puncheon floor of the cabin. The little fellow had never seen bread other than that made from the coarse meal of Indian corn crushed in the rude mortar, and he imagined that in the strange object he possessed a new toy. It is said that Hacker wept over the incident.

Hacker, in one of his trips across the mountains for salt, was caught in a bitter storm on the bleak and cold Alleghenies. He made camp for the night, but from some cause was unable to kindle a fire with his flint and steel. His case was most desperate, and realizing the danger in which he stood, he had recourse to a most ingenious method of keeping warm. Standing his two pack horses side by side, he lashed them securely together. Then wrapping his blankets about him and stretching himself upon their backs, he spent the night in warmth and comfort.

The inadequacy of the flint and steel as a fire-producer undoubtedly resulted in more than one tragedy in the early settlement of the country. Hacker was fortunate in possessing means by which to avert death by freezing. Not all were so fortunate, as is shown by the following occurrence in the same range of mountains nearly one hundred years later. It also evidences with what astonishing tenacity the simple, contented hunter folk of this vast mountain region held to the primitive customs of their forefathers. The incident was told me in a hunter's cabin on the Greenbrier River in Pocahontas County in 1877, near the scene of the tragedy, which happened only a short time before.

A hunter had guided a party across the mountains. Winter was at hand. There was the appearance of snow, and a snow-storm in those mountains is accompanied with a humid cold that penetrates to the marrow and kills, unless fire can be had at once. The hardy guide, against the protests of friends, started on foot alone to return by the unfrequented trail through that wilderness. A terrible and blinding snowstorm swept the mountains, followed by the most intense cold. The poor guide became bewildered, wandered from the path, and was soon lost in the vast, desolate forest. His only means of producing fire was the flint and steel. These failed, and after hours, no one will ever know how long, he sat down at the root of a tree with his rifle resting between his knees and his arms folded across his breast. In this position a rescuing party, one of whom was Robert Carr, who told the story, several days later found him with bowed head, in frozen slumber. The poor fellow's knuckles on both hands were badly cut by the flint in his unavailing attempt to strike fire.



## CHAPTER VII

The Stroud family, living on Gauley River a few miles south of Bull Town, was murdered by a band of Shawnees from Ohio, in June, 1772. (1) Bull Town was an Indian village at a salt spring on the Little Kanawha, about a mile and a quarter below the present Bull Town postoffice in Braxton County, West Virginia. It was a Delaware (2) settlement, consisting of five families, colonized from the Unadilla River, New York, about 1768, by Captain Bull, a Delaware chief, the chief man and ruler of the village. These Indians "were in habits of social and friendly intercourse with the whites on Buckhannon and on Hacker's Creek; frequently hunting and visiting with them." (3) Adam Stroud was absent from home at the time of the murder of his family. The Shawnees drove off his cattle, taking a trail that led in the direction of the Delaware settlement, though there never was any evidence that the Shawnees went to Captain Bull's village. The trail leading towards the village was discovered by the white settlers, which was eagerly taken as proof that the Delawares were guilty of the murder. William White, William Hacker, John Cutright, Jesse Hughes, (4) and one other whose name is now forgotten, five of the most desperate men in the Buckhannon and Hacker's Creek settlements, set out for the Delaware village to avenge the death of the Strouds. (5) There are no known circumstances that justified the acts of the settlers at Bull Town, and there is every proof at hand to show that it was murder committed in treachery and cold blood. The fact that the trail of the Stroud murderers "led in the direction of Bull Town" cannot be taken as evidence of the guilt of the hapless Delawares. If they were the perpetrators of the crime, what became of the Stroud cattle? So far as history or tradition tells, the cattle were never found. If the destroyers of the friendly Delawares "found clothing and other things known to have belonged to the Stroud family," (6) in their possession, why did they not bring some of those articles to view in the "remonstrating settlement" in vindication of their honor, and to convince the people that just retribution at their hands had fallen upon the guilty parties?

Men capable of such crimes on the border were clever in

(1) See page 433. (2) p. 433. (3) p. 435. (4) p. 435. (5) p. 435. (6) p. 436.

framing excuses to justify their actions. Their unsupported statement that such articles were found at Bull Town, in the absence of the articles, which should have been brought to the settlements and exhibited, cannot be accepted. And if such articles had been found and carried to the settlements, and there exposed to public view, the circumstances would have fallen far short of proving the guilt of the Delawares. They might have been obtained by barter or by gift. Or the Shawnees might have desired to cast suspicion on the friendly Delawares, and this supposition may account for their taking a trail in the direction of their village. This would enable them to escape suspicion and make their escape, leaving the Delawares to bear the consequences of a crime of which they were innocent and ignorant. Friendly Indians were always in more or less disrepute with both the settlers and their own people. The slaughter of the unfortunate Moravian Indians at Gnadenhutten ten years later is a case in point.

Just how the village of Bull Town became such an easy prey to the fury of the bordermen is not known. Circumstances connected with the outrage strengthens the belief that they, like their unfortunate relatives at Gnadenhutten, were the victims of craven treachery. Notwithstanding the supposition that there had been some fighting between these men and the Indians, it is now known that there was no fight. Christopher T. Cutright, commonly known as Uncle Stuffle Cutright, a son of John Cutright, one of the men of the expedition, gave me personally an account of the tragedy and its awful sequel at Indian Camp. He told the story as revealed to him by his father. It conforms strongly with the traditionary account given by the Hacker family. (7) While not going into the minute details of the massacre, it was stated explicitly, as a fact, that there had been no fight, and that the Indians, one and all, were put to death, their bodies thrown into the river, and their homes desolated.

It has been conceded by historians that Captain Bull was killed in the general destruction of his people. But such was not the case; if the word of John Cutright, previously quoted, and one of the principals in the massacre, is to be regarded as reliable. To his positive testimony a verifying traditional account is still current among the old settlers of that region.

Mr. Cutright's statement was, that sometime prior to the massacre, death entered the lowly hut of Captain Bull and

(7) See page 436.

robbed him of his little child. The body was tenderly buried somewhere in the deep shades of the primeval forest. The parental affection in the Indian bosom is strong, and the grief of the stricken parents was most poignant. From their white neighbors came no show of respect, no condolence or expression of sympathy. So keenly was felt this heartless indifference, that Captain Bull despaired of ever living in harmony and social friendship with the usurpers of his country, and in bitter anguish and desolation of spirit the chieftain exhumed the body of his child, and with his immediate family rejoined his tribe in the country north of the Ohio. (8) The other five families remained, and were all sacrificed.

We shall find Capt. Bull again on the Virginia border, but not as a peaceful village builder.



(8) See page 436.

## CHAPTER VIII

Against the avowed purpose to kill the Bull Town Indians, a "remonstrance of the settlement generally," says *Wishers*, was made. (1) Evidently this "remonstrance" was formal and feeble. No concerted action was taken to enforce order or to stay this the most deliberate and fiendish crime ever enacted on the border of the Upper Monongahela. A not altogether groundless dread of incurring the wrath of the five bordermen, who would likely brook no interference with their plans, may have justified to some small extent the indifference manifested by the settlers. But both the sequel and previous circumstances point an accusing finger, and the investigator is constrained to believe that the settlers generally were in direct sympathy with the acts of the merciless five, and felt little or no concern for the safety of their red friends on the Kanawha, or how they fared at the hands of the murderous foe.

While at Bull Town, the whites learned from the Delawares, that there was at that time a party of thirteen Indians, a hunting-party from beyond the Ohio, at Indian Camp, fourteen miles above the fort at Buckhannon. It is not probable that this information could have been obtained had not the settlers professed friendship and hidden their intentions for a time after their arrival at the village. Having secured this information, and their passions aroused by the scenes of their inhuman blood-letting at the Delaware town, they returned to the settlement and made rapid and grim preparations for the slaughter of the unsuspecting party at Indian Camp Rock. The sympathy (?) expressed for the Bull Town Indians found no utterance in behalf of the doomed thirteen at Indian Camp. These were unconscious of treachery, and were enjoying the solitude of their ancient rock camp in the wilderness of the Buckhannon. Yet they were marked as the next victims of the fierce bordermen.

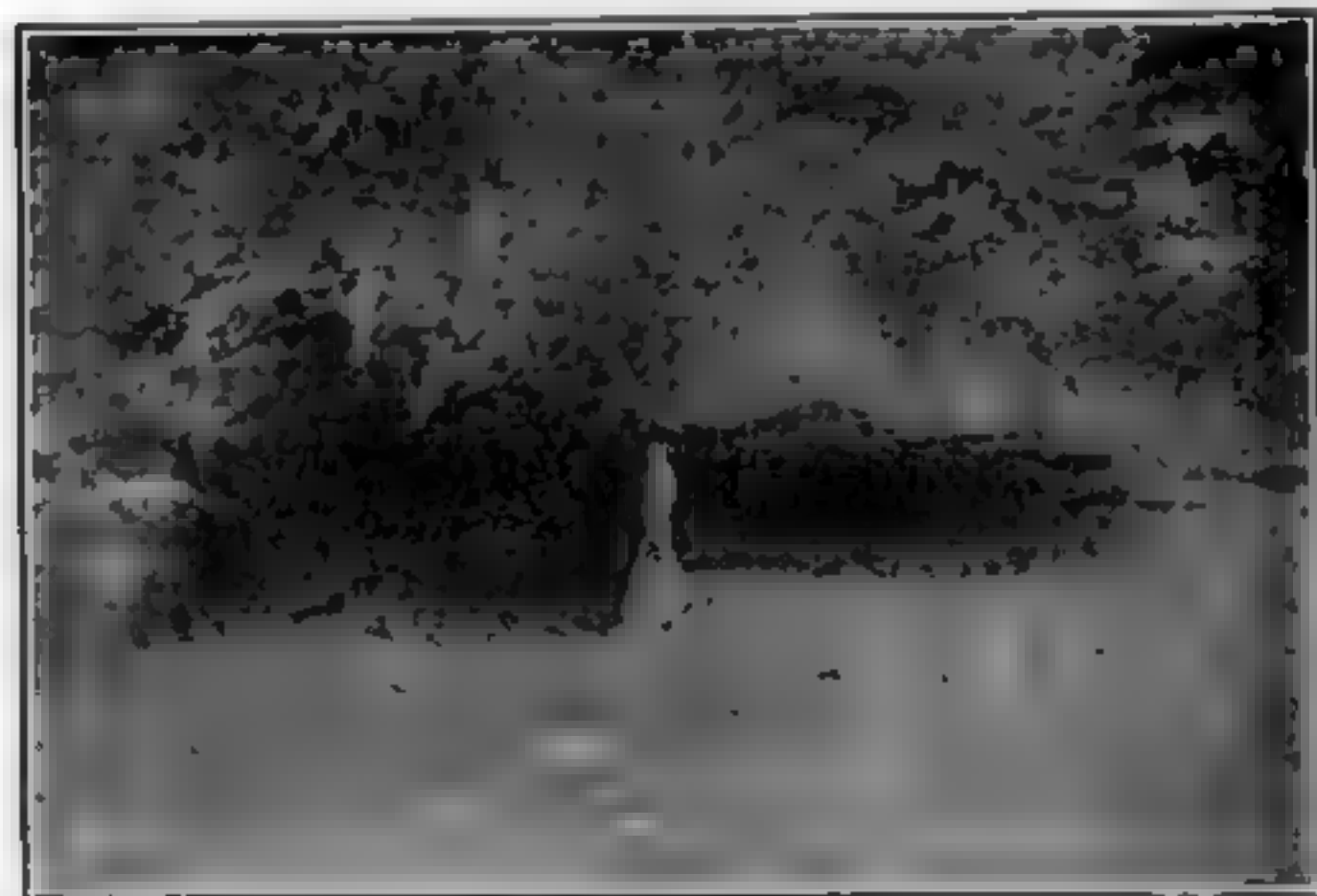
Before marching against this new camp, the settlers were reinforced by volunteers who must have been acquainted with their intentions. Among these were Samuel Pringle, James Strange and John Truby, from the Buckhannon settlement, and several others whose names are unknown at this day. Truby's son had been killed by Indians some years before. With their

(1) See page 436.



force thus augmented, the company, under the leadership of White, set out for the Indian camp, and arrived in the immediate vicinity in the night, perhaps a short time before the break of day.

Indian Camp is situated on Indian Camp Run, in an amphitheatre-like valley on the land now owned by Lothrop Phillips in



INDIAN CAMP

Photographed by Professor G. F. Queen, 1892

an outcropping of carboniferous sandstone. This rock camp is of natural origin. The entrance is some fifty feet wide by about twelve in height, and it has a cavity or room running back a distance of twenty-six feet. The roof slopes uniformly from the front to the rear, and it is from four to six feet in height at the back of the cave. It faces east, and the first rays of the sun penetrate its inmost depths. This cave, or "rockhouse," as such overhanging rocks were called by the early settlers, is so sheltered that the fiercest storms lodge neither snow nor rain beneath the roof. It would be difficult to conceive a more perfect, natural shelter from the weather, and it is not surprising that it was a favorite resort of the Indians, and became such for the white pioneer scouts and hunters. An early settler lived therein with his family one entire summer, while he was erecting his cabin. Large congregations assembled there for public worship in post-

pioneer days. In later years it has been put to the more ignoble use of a stable for domestic animals.

The entrance to the camp is flanked on both sides by huge fragments of sandstone, about which grew tangled thickets of laurel, vines and brush; much of which still remained when I last visited the locality in 1893. This afforded an effective covering for an ambushing foe. Within the immediate entrance there is a large block of stone bearing some resemblance to a rude altar. From this point the ground falls in a gentle slope to Indian Camp Run, several rods to the east.

It was at this stream that the settlers halted, while Captain White and Jesse Hughes stealthily reconnoitered the camp. After observing the position of the Indians and noting the best mode of attack, they returned to the company and prepared for the assault. The men were divided into two bands, one of them headed by White and the other by Hughes. These approached the camp from opposite sides, in the uncertain light of early dawn, and soon found the Indians astir, preparing their morning meal. White was in position first, and Hughes was to give a whistle, the signal of attack; to be answered by White. It seems that the light was too uncertain to aim with accuracy, and at the risk of discovery they awaited the tardy approach of day. They had command of the entire entrance, and there was no escape for the Indians.

As the shadows dispersed before the broadening rays of morning, the stillness was suddenly broken by a shrill whistle, and:

"Wild as the scream of the curlew,  
From crag to crag the signal flew."

The recesses of the cavern and the adjacent cliffs and forest resounded with the roar of heavy riflery and the exultant yells of the bordermen as they sprang forward to complete the work of death. But there was little need for the knife or tomahawk. So deadly had been the volley that but one Indian, unarmed and badly wounded, escaped from that grotto of death. He was scarce able to hobble to the sheltering pit of an uprooted tree near by, where his relentless pursuers soon followed him. He greeted them with a friendly and supplicating "How." To this amicable salutation Captain White replied: "Damn you: you want powder and lead," and having reloaded, he dispatched his victim with another shot.

Thus perished this band of friendly Indians, in time of peace and without provocation. Their destruction was the blackest of crimes.

The number of settlers engaged in this massacre is not known, but the fact that every Indian was either killed or disabled at the first fire would indicate that the "remonstrating settlement"



ASH CAMP  
Queen, 1892)

must have been represented by many of its best riflemen. The victims were left where they fell, to gorge the voracious wolf, and the carrion birds of the air. John Cutright's statement was to the effect that the dead Indians were left unburied, but others said that they were interred in the loose debris of the camp floor.

An aged nimrod, born in 1801, who resorted to this camp during the first quarter of the century, related to me the following story:

"Game of all kinds was most abundant in the wilderness region surrounding both the Indian, and Ash Camps. These camps were favorite rendezvous for the hunter. In a season's hunt of about one month, at Ash Camp, I killed seventy deer alone, to say nothing of the bear and turkey secured. I killed eleven bear around Indian Camp in one day. Hunting throughout that country was superb; but my associations with the latter

camp was not of a continued pleasant nature. When I first visited it, there was a low, mound-like ridge some fifteen feet in length and eighteen inches high, near the center of the room, and immediately back of the large block of sandstone which stands at the entrance. I sometimes pillowed my head against the sloping base of the mound, wholly unconscious of the gruesome objects hidden beneath.

"One day a pouring rain prevented hunting, and in idle curiosity I began removing the dirt from one end of the mound, and was soon startled to find the skeleton feet of a human body. My interest was aroused and I continued the excavation, and discovered that the mound was full of human bones, representing, as I estimated, no less than eighteen bodies. They had been buried on a level with the original floor of the camp. In this bone-heap, I found numerous fragments of crockery, and a finely polished, hard stone "bleater." This bleater was perfect, and beautifully made. It was used by the Indian hunter to imitate the bleat of a fawn, and was evidently of Indian manufacture. With it I could mimic the cry of a fawn to perfection. It was afterwards broken and lost through accident. I prized it highly."

The "fragments of crockery" alluded to by the old hunter, was evidently that of steatite vessels, pieces of which were found there in after years. Shreds of crude Indian pottery were strewn all through the floor accumulation of the camp.

It is hardly probable that so many bodies could have been interred in the manner described and escaped the ravages of wild animals. It was a custom of some of the tribes to bury only the bones of their dead in a common, or final resting place. This manner of sepulcher, known as "bundle burial," is sometimes met with in this region. If the find in question was not of this nature, which I am inclined to believe is the case, then it was evidently the bones of the slain Indians, inhumed by the whites in later years. (2)

The discovery of these skeletons was regarded as proof of the tradition that during the border wars, a band of thirteen Indians returning from a raid in Tygart's Valley late one season, were snowbound at Indian Camp, and starved to death. The great abundance of game in that region would have been a guarantee against such a tragedy, even if it were probable that an unprecedented storm should have occurred at the time of year that we

2) See page 436.



know the Indian incursions took place. The deep snow would have facilitated, rather than retard the success of the hunter. I knew a hunter in the Cheat Mountain, who, with a comrade, during a remarkably heavy snow and within a few days' time killed forty deer, many of which were clubbed to death. The animals are helpless in the snow, while the men properly equipped, travel easily over the surface.

Not only were deer plentiful, but this region was a favorite wintering quarters for bear; nor were they usually hard to locate. "Bear Den" rocks are located at the mouth of Indian Camp Run. In 1893, a middle-aged gentleman who was raised near Indian Camp, told me that when a boy he knew his father to have at one time sixteen bears in his cabin thawing them out so he could skin them and dress the meat. As bear hunters the woods Indians have always excelled. Evidently the starvation story originated with those who engaged in the killing at Indian Camp, and was told for the purpose of covering up their crime.



## CHAPTER IX

The memories associated with John Cutright, the scout, more than any other of his companions, are inseparably connected with the region around Buckhannon and Indian Camp. He was at an early age a hunter of renown, and the Indians occasionally sought his companionship. Soon after the massacres narrated in foregoing chapters, Cutright one day was plowing corn in a field adjoining the forest; when an Indian suddenly appeared on the summit of a large rock at the edge of the woods, apparently alone and unarmed. As Cutright approached him, he held up to view an unfinished pair of moccasins. In broken English he said, "How! Injun no hurt white man. Injun make him white man moccasin. Good Injun. Good white man. White man big hunter. Injun big hunter. White man go with Injun, hunt. Get heap deer, heap bear. Ugh!" But Cutright having no desire for Indian companionship and fearing treachery, declined the invitation and continued his plowing. The Indian remained on the rock industriously at work completing the moccasins, and continued to importune the noted hunter by repeatedly ejaculating "Good Injun; good white man! Go hunt." Cutright at last became alarmed at the persistence of the strange moccasin-maker, and unhitched his horse from the plow, mounted its back and galloped home. The Indian disappeared as silently as he came.

In 1781, a certificate was granted "John Cutright, Sen., 400 acres at the mouth of Cutright's Run, to include his Settlement made in 1770, with a preemption of 1000 acres adjoining."

It has been supposed generally that this settler was John Cutright, the scout, which is error. *Withers*, in speaking of the emigrants who arrived under the guidance of Samuel Pringle, says, "Among them were John and Benjamin Cutright, who settled on the Buckhannon, where John Cutright the younger, now [1831] lives." (1)

"John Cutright, the younger," was the scout; and a son of Benjamin. The settlement was made at the mouth of Cutright's Run, and it was here that the scout was accosted by the friendly moccasin-maker. Cutright's Run empties into the Buckhannon River, some four miles above the present town of Buckhannon.

(1) See page 436.

of the mouth of the run, charged.

This was buried by the Indians  
in settlement.

One night the Indians stole a horse

following the trail next day Cut-

right in Cutright's Run, about

Not caring to venture to a con-

frontation with the enemy, he retreated.

Now an Indian running across the

road and the Indian felt Cut-

right in its back, and with a who-

llop he was still standing in 1894,

owned by Cutright's descendants.

One day he had been hunting

the way home. Cutright was

lost the pommel of his saddle,

etc. to let the horse drink, and

Cutright was severely wounded,

coming out through his back,

in a vital point. He spattered ap-

part while his companion in the

After a short running fight, he

either then, abandoning the fight,

at a distance, he grew faint and

his position in the saddle, and so

on the ground, where his com-

panion the bullet hole the blood was

in a gash was cut and stripped,

a handkerchief was placed, and

was then withdrawn, leaving the

the hemorrhage, and Cut-

right's companion mounting behind

him. In this manner, they made

may have met their origin in an

Austral's letter, 2. This volume

ended during some excursion with

his wound in the way described.

After surgery, he was known in the

1813.

John Cutright developed into one of the most daring scouts  
of the Virginia border. He was also a soldier of the Revolutionary  
War. In his original declaration for pension made August 7, 1832,  
of Lewis County, Virginia, it would appear that he was born  
near Moorefield, Hampshire (now Hardy County, Virginia), in  
1754, but he had no record of his age. In May, 1778, he volun-  
teered for a term of eighteen months as private in Capt. James  
Boothe's Company of Indian Spies, at West's Fort on Hacker's  
Creek. He spied throughout most of (then) Monongalia County,  
and Capt. Boothe was killed on Boothe's Creek June, 1779. (4)  
After the death of Capt. Boothe he continued spying under the  
Company's Lieutenant, Edmund Freeman, until November, 1779,  
when his term of enlistment expired. Lieutenant Freeman left  
for Kentucky without officially discharging any of the Company.

"The Indian hostilities continuing, Capt. George Jackson  
was required to raise a company to spy in the same territory of  
country which Capt. Boothe's Company had been spying." Cut-  
right joined this company as a private, a few days after his service  
under Capt. Boothe and Lieutenant Freeman had expired. Jacob  
Brake, an ex-Indian captive, (5) was Lieutenant of this company,  
and the afterwards notorious Timothy Dorman was Ensign. Cut-  
right continued in the service until the latter part of 1781, and  
saw "several skirmishes with the Indians." David W. Sleeth,  
who was in service with Cutright, testified that he once saw Cut-  
right wounded by an Indian. Jacob Cozard (Cozad), a clergyman,  
and Alexander West, the scout, both testified in behalf of Cutright.  
His claim was allowed and on May 18, 1833, a certificate was  
issued granting him eighty dollars a year, dating from March 4,  
1831, including back pay.

Cutright was afterwards examined by Special Pension Agent  
Singleton, who sent the following report to the Commissioner of  
Pensions:

May 3, 1834. Saw Cutright at Fishers and received from him the state-  
ment which follows: Says I was 70 years old in August next, born in south-  
east of Pennsylvania, was brought west of the Alleghany mountains when 8 years  
settled in the place where he now lives. He married James Capt. Boothe  
afterwards. I joined his company at Natron's Fort in the Spring of the  
year 1778. West's Fort. Remained there until the summer of 1779. It was a  
company of Capt. Boothe's and he was killed at the Battle of the Run. I then  
remained. After the expiration of the year of the Revolutionary War I  
left for Fort Lewis Co. he was confined there in 1831. The



By the side of a large stone near the mouth of the run, charred corn is still turned by the plow. This was burned by the Indians on one of their incursions into the settlement.

Local tradition says that one night the Indians stole a horse from John Cutright, Junior. Following the trail next day Cutright found the horse tied to a sugar tree on Cutright's Run, about three miles from Buckhannon. Not caring to venture too close until he learned something of the location of the enemy, he secreted himself at a distance. He soon saw an Indian running across the valley. Taking careful aim, he fired and the Indian fell. Cutright dashed to his horse, sprang upon its back, and with a whoop of defiance, galloped away. This tree was still standing in 1894, and was often pointed out to the traveler by Cutright's descendants.

At another time, Cutright and a companion had been hunting on French Creek and were on their way home. Cutright was mounted, with a deer slung across the pommel of his saddle. While crossing a stream, they halted to let the horse drink, and were fired on by two Indians. Cutright was severely wounded, the ball entering his breast, and coming out through his back, striking in its passage, however no vital point. He spurred up his horse and fled toward the fort, while his companion in the retreat held the Indians back. After a short running fight, one of the Indians was killed, and the other then abandoned the pursuit. When Cutright had ridden some distance, he grew faint and found it was impossible to retain his position in the saddle, and so dismounted and stretched himself on the ground, where his companion soon after found him. From the bullet hole the blood was pouring, and to stop it a small sour gum was cut and stripped of its bark. Over the end of this a handkerchief was placed and forced into the wound. The stick was then withdrawn, leaving the handkerchief in place. This stopped the hemorrhage, and Cutright was placed on his horse, his companion mounting behind and supporting him in the saddle. In this manner, they made their way in safety to the fort.

The two foregoing stories may have had their origin in an occurrence set forth in Col. Westfall's letter, (2) this volume. But evidently Cutright was wounded during some excursion with William Hacker, who dressed his wound in the way described. Owing to Hacker's skill in rude surgery, he was known in the settlements as "Surgeon Hacker." (3)

(2) See page 436. (3) p. 436.

John Cutright developed into one of the most daring scouts on the Virginia border. He was also a soldier of the Revolutionary War. In his original declaration for pension made August 7, 1832, in Lewis County (Virginia), it would appear that he was born near Moorefield, Hampshire (now Hardy County, Virginia), in 1754, but he had no record of his age. In May, 1778, he volunteered for a term of eighteen months as private in Capt. James Boothe's Company of Indian Spies, at West's Fort on Hacker's Creek. He spied throughout most of (then) Monongalia County, until Capt. Boothe was killed on Boothe's Creek June, 1779. (4) After the death of Capt. Boothe he continued spying under the Company's Lieutenant, Edmund Freeman, until November, 1779, when his term of enlistment expired. Lieutenant Freeman left for Kentucky without officially discharging any of the Company.

"The Indian hostilities continuing, Capt. George Jackson was required to raise a company to spy in the same territory of country which Capt. Boothe's Company had been spying." Cutright joined this company as a private, a few days after his service under Capt. Boothe and Lieutenant Freeman had expired. Jacob Brake, an ex-Indian captive, (5) was Lieutenant of this company, and the afterwards notorious Timothy Dorman was Ensign. Cutright continued in the service until the latter part of 1781, and was in "several skirmishes with the Indians." David W. Sleeth, who was in service with Cutright, testified that he once saw Cutright wounded by an Indian. Jacob Cozard [Cozad], a clergyman, and Alexander West, the scout, both testified in behalf of Cutright. His claim was allowed and on May 18, 1833, a certificate was issued granting him eighty dollars a year, dating from March 4, 1831, including back pay.

Cutright was afterwards examined by Special Pension Agent Singleton, who sent the following report to the Commissioner of Pensions:

"July 3, 1834. Saw Cutright at his home, and received from him the statement here following: Says he was 79 years old in August next, born on south branch of Potomac; was brought west of the Alleghany mountains when 8 years old and settled on the place where he now lives. He enlisted under Capt. Booth for twelve months. Joined his company at Nutter's Fort in the Spring; in the Fall removed to West's Fort. Remained there until his time expired. That was in the year in which Capt. Booth was killed, and before the war of the Revolution had commenced. After the commencement of the war of the Rev. and whilst residing at Buckhannon Fort (Lewis Co.) he was drafted for an 18 mos. tour. He

(4) See page 436. (5) p. 436.

refused to go. A Col. Wilson who then resided in Tiger's Valley sent a guard of men after him, caught him, tied him and marched him to Staunton. (6) A Sergeant Lack commanded the guard. On reaching Staunton, he enlisted under a Capt. Matthews for two years. Matthews enlisted 6 men including himself. They were sent on under Sergeant Samuel Warner to join Washington's main army then at the White Plains. They set out from Staunton in the summer, went through Winchester, Reading, Philadelphia; on getting to Phil. rested 4 days in the Barracks, set out again and pushed on without stopping until they joined the main army at the White Plains. The original number 6 was neither increased or diminished on the march above mentioned. Joined the main army in July. The army marched from the White Plains to West Point and from there to Middlebrook where it went into winter quarters. Remained there till warm weather. When part of the army (himself included) about 100 in number went up the North river as a guard. Gone at least 2 weeks. Can't recollect who commanded the guard *nor the name of any officer that was along on that occasion*. On returning was sent to a bridge on the North river where a colonel's (don't recollect his name) baggage had been broken down as a guard, remained there about a month. Think there were 10 or 12 of them. They were under the command of Sergeant Campbell. The main army marched from Middlebrook but can't recollect where. It got back to West Point where his time expired and where he got his discharge and returned home. His discharge was signed by a Colonel, whose name he don't recollect. On his way home met General Washington who also signed his discharge. Can't recollect the years in which the service above described was done.

"I have been unable to procure any evidence in reference to this man. Comparing his statement here given with his declaration it may be readily discerned whether or not he is an imposter.

W. G. SINGLETON, S. A."

Owing to the marked discrepancies between his original declaration and his statement to Singleton, Cutright's name was stricken from the pension roll, along with several others, from Lewis County, who were not entitled to pensions. (7) Subsequent investigation evoked the fact that Cutright had never enlisted in Capt. Jackson's Company of Scouts. Mr. Johnson F. Nowlan, Neulan or Naulon (name uncertain), who was Cutright's agent or attorney, visited him at his home and drew up his declaration for pension, and unknown to the scout, who could neither read nor write, and for the purpose of strengthening his case, added that part of it which alleges service with Capt. Jackson. For this work, Cutright was forced to pay to the unscrupulous attorney, eighty dollars from the first money drawn.

It now devolved upon Cutright to substantiate his Revolutionary record, as it had developed that those who served as border scouts alone were not entitled to pension.

(6) See page 436. (7) p. 438.

On August 20, 1835, Solomon Ryan testified in behalf of Cutright, corroborating the statement of the old soldier to Singleton. The following testimony is of historic interest, and I give it unabridged:

"LEWIS COUNTY VA.

"Susanna Stalnaker, in the 70th year of her age appeared before me the subscribed, one of the Commonwealth's Justice of the Peace for said county, and being sworn as the law directs, sayeth that she believes that it was about the year 1778 John Cutright was taken from the fort on Buckhannon, where she then lived, as a soldier draughted from Capt. Samuel Pringle's Company for a term of 18 months against the British, and to the best of her recollection it was 2 years before he returned, and the next spring after his return he was wounded by the Indian, (8) when on pursuit of them when they had committed depredations near the place where they were then posted. She also remembers hearing some one that returned from taking them to Staunton say that the above mentioned Cutright being dissatisfied with his officers, he enlisted for two years' service, at (9) Staunton, Augusta Co. (Va.)

Her

(Signed) SUSANNA X STALNAKER

Mark

WILLIAM POWERS, J. P."

Sworn to August 1835.

Cutright was restored to the pension roll, but at the reduced rate of \$43.33 per year from March 4, 1834, until his death, March 8, 1850.

It will be noted that Cutright could not recall the years in which his service in the army occurred, nor is it probable that the date can at this time be fixed. Washington had his headquarters at White Plains during the summer and autumn of 1778, and seven brigades of the American Army were quartered at Middlebrook the winter of 1779-80. (10) During a part of this period, Cutright, according to his original declaration, was an enlisted spy on the border. It is possible that he was with some contingent of the American Army wintered at Middlebrook in the later years of the war. Comfortable log cabins were built for the soldiers during the previous encampment, and they may have been in use afterwards.

In a statement made in July, 1838, Cutright was under the impression that his company was commanded by Capt. John Lewis, under Col. Matthews, whose given name he could not recall. With a view of possibly determining the exact date of Cutright's Revolutionary service, and the regiment to which he was attached, a search was made of the Revolutionary Muster

(8) See page 438. (9) p. 438. (10) p. 439.



ing, to have the first shot. The ball disabled the bear but did not kill it. White withheld his shot and urged his now excited companion to reload quickly and kill the bear before it recovered sufficiently to make an attack or to escape. He did so, but when he again attempted to recharge his rifle, he found that his ramrod was missing. Thinking that in his hurry he had dropped it, he looked about but could not find it. The discomfited hunter became puzzled, when White, who had been regarding him with amusement, laughingly pointed to the now lifeless body of the bear, from the side of which protruded the end of the splintered ramrod; showing that it had not been withdrawn before he made the second shot. From a young hickory, White deftly shaped a new ramrod for his friend, who begged that the incident be kept from his companions at the fort.

After the breaking out of the war, the young officer was assigned duty on the Canadian border, but ready means for communicating with the forest belle was at hand. An active young Indian warrior agreed to carry an exchange of letters, the compensation to be ten gallons of rum. After receiving a description of the young woman, he fastened the letter securely to his person and started fully armed on his long journey to the south. Arriving in the Buckhannon settlement, and knowing the dangers that beset him, he lurked and hid for two or three days, watching for an opportunity to deliver the letter.

One morning the girl had occasion to go from the fort to a nearby cabin, the path leading through a stretch of wood. After proceeding a short distance, she was startled to see a half-naked Indian step suddenly from behind a tree, immediately in front of her. In his belt hung a tomahawk and scalping knife, his left hand grasped a long rifle, while his right hand, which was extended to her, held a sealed package. Before she could recover from her fright sufficiently to utter a cry, the warrior, with a peaceful gesture and friendly "How!" handed her the package and in broken English said, "Squaw be no fraid. Injun no hurt. Me come from white chief. Him send good talk. Me come get squaw's talk when moon wake up," pointing to the brow of the eastern hill. He then glided into the thicket and was lost to view.

It happened that day that some men who were scouting about the woods, discovered the presence of the Indian and gave immediate pursuit. The warrior proved very athletic and soon

outstripped his pursuers. He disappeared over the river bank just below the mill dam, where all trace of him was lost. After an exhaustive search of several hours the pursuit was abandoned. The Indian, it was supposed, despairing of escape, and for the purpose of saving his scalp, had plunged into the river and was drowned.

In the meantime, the young woman had prepared her communication, keeping the mission of the Indian secret. She was sorely grieved when she learned of his fate, for he was the only one by whom a letter could be forwarded. Night came on, and most anxiously did she await the appointed time of meeting. Just as the moon gleamed over the brow of the wood-crested hill, she stealthily repaired to the tryst. Like a wraith the Indian glided from the shadow of the thicket and came silently to her side. She handed him the package containing her "talk," also a small bag filled with jerked venison and parched corn. With a grunt expressive of appreciation, the warrior turned and started on his journey to the distant north. In due time he reached his destination, delivered the letter and received the promised rum, on which he and his friends became "gloriously drunk." Of the sequel to this story, nothing is known.

The next day, when Captain White returned to the fort and was told of the Indian and his mysterious disappearance, he chided the men, and declared that if they would go with him to the river he would show them "whar th' Injun was hid." Proceeding to the river bank, White pointed to the sheet of water pouring over the mill dam, and exclaimed, "If yo' had looked behind thar' yo' would have found yer Injun." An examination of the premises proved that his judgment was correct. The wily Indian, hard-pressed, had darted through the cataract of water, where he rested in safety on the apron or platform of timbers built at the foot of the dam.

There is a tradition in that country, handed down through the descendants of Captain White and the Cutrights, to the effect that in the early years of the settlement there were captured near the fort at Buckhannon an Indian and a Frenchman, who were loitering about the country. They were held in captivity. The Frenchman was of a morose disposition and very melancholy. He would not bathe, but took great pride in dressing his hair, which was very long and abundant. He refused food and died of

starvation. Nothing could be learned of his past history, but it is supposed that he was a renegade from the Northwestern wilderness. As to the fate of the Indian, the tradition is silent. He was probably put to death.

About the death of Captain White there hovers a tinge of romance. There is also revealed a trait of Indian character not often met with in our border annals. With the Indian the spirit of retaliation was an unqualified principle, an inherent right; but it mattered not on whom the avenging hatchet fell. The life forfeited by an innocent member of the offending tribe or family was regarded as a just compensation for a life taken. This mode of warfare was honorable with the Indian. With the settlers the principle was regarded just, so long as Indian met Indian, if they themselves did the shooting; but when waged by the Indian against the border it was held in utter detestation and horror. While the Indian however, was content with the reprisal of scalp for scalp, the venom of the average borderer was insatiate.

Under no circumstances was Captain White ever known to show mercy to an Indian. With some of his associates he was hunting, when they surprised a small body of Indians. They fired and killed several, while a few escaped by flight. One active young warrior fled with White in hot pursuit, tomahawk in hand. The fugitive was driven to a precipice, over which he leaped. White jumped after him, both sinking to their waists in a quagmire, from which they were unable to extricate themselves. The young Indian, who was wholly unarmed made frantic efforts to escape, while White made strenuous attempts to strike him with his tomahawk. In the struggle the warrior inadvertently flung out his arm towards White, who seized his hand, and drawing his helpless victim within reach, sank the hatchet in his head.

That heartless blow sealed the doom of Captain White. The father of the victim was among those who escaped, and he seems to have sworn vengeance against the murderer of his son. For several years this stern warrior lurked about the settlement, trailing White with the relentless tenacity of a sleuth-hound. Finally, on Friday evening, the 8th of March, 1782, he shot White within sight of the fort, and in the presence of several of its inmates. (9) The avenger attempted to secure the scalp of his victim, but was prevented by the rescue party that hurried from the fort. This was one case where an Indian was satisfied with the death of the

(9) See page 440

guilty party only. That White "was tomahawked, scalped and lacerated in a most frightful manner," is a mistake. (10) The facts are given here. The upturned roots of the tree under which it is said that White was shot is still to be seen. This tree stood on the opposite side of the river from the fort.

The death of Captain White, coupled with the capture by the Indians at the same time of Timothy Dorman, a degenerate renegade of whom the settlers stood in dread, resulted in the temporary abandonment of the Buckhannon settlement. (11)

There is strong evidence that White was betrayed or lured to death by Timothy Dorman, and that the latter was not captured, in the true sense of the word, but went willingly with the Indians.



SCENE OF CAPTAIN WILLIAM WHITE'S DEATH

Miss Josephine MacAvoy, Photographer, 1909

Looking east across the Buckhannon River from where the fort stood. Tradition has it that Capt. White was killed either in the low gap where the prostrate tree lies, or to the left under the high ridge, where can be seen the stump of an upturned tree. Both are indicated by X. In either case, he evidently succeeded in reaching a point near the river before falling from his horse, where he was met by the rescue party from the fort. See Col. H. H. Hall's letter, Appendix I, D. Volume.

(10) See page 441 (11) p. 441



Captain White was buried in what is now the Heavner Cemetery at Buckhannon, and by the grave of John Fink, (12) who was killed by Indians the preceding February. Capt. White's grave is marked by a rude flagstone, which bears his name without dates or other inscription. According to *Withers*, Fink was killed February 8, (Friday) 1782. The rough sandstone at his grave is inscribed with this legend:

"Here lieth the bo— John Fink who was killed by Indens in 1782, Feb. the —th"

Where the dash occurs after "bo," the stone is broken and missing. The inscription evidently read "body of." Part of the inscription is very dim and almost illegible, the date of the month being entirely so.

Col. Westfall, several years ago, endeavored to induce the citizens of Buckhannon to erect a block of granite over the neglected graves of Capt. White and John Fink. The Colonel did not live to realize his cherished hopes. (13)

#### THE CAPT. WHITE AND FINK MONUMENT.

*This cut was contributed by the Elizabeth Zane Chapter D. A. R. With its transmission, Mrs. Clara DuMont Heavner, Regent, writes me:*

"It is owing to the patriotism of a little boy that the last resting place of Capt. White and Fink can now be identified. Elias Heavner, was born in Pendleton County, Va., April 9, 1805, and came with his father, Nicholas Heavner, 2nd, who in 1815 settled on 400 acres purchased of George Jackson, on the Buckhannon River, including the site of Bush's Fort. When but eleven years old, Elias, impressed with the story of the killing of these pioneers, unassisted procured from the river bed, irregular flag stones and with childish simplicity carved in rude lettering, "KILLED BY THE INDENS" along with additional legends which you already have, and set them up at the neglected graves; which until then were unmarked. Some of the inscriptions were defaced during the Civil War by relic hunters. These stones we have cemented to the base of the monument." Elias Heavner died October 10, 1884. He was the father of Maj. J. W. and Clark W. Heavner, of Buckhannon, West Va.

(12) See page 441. (13) p. 441



THE CAPTAIN WHITE AND FINK MONUMENT

ILLUSTRATION CONTRIBUTED BY THE ELIZABETH ZANE CHAPTER, D. A. R.

Jacob Bush, referred to earlier in this chapter in connection with Jacob Westfall, was a brother of John Bush, who built the fort at Buckhannon. It is not known at what time he came to the settlements, but is supposed to be the same Jacob Bush, who in 1781 received a grant for "400 acres on the West Fork, about two miles below the main fork of said river, to include his improvement made in 1777." He was a man of intelligence and veracity, and his declaration is of historic value. It is here given in full:

"VA. LEWIS COUNTY

"On November 7, 1832, personally appeared in open court, etc., Jacob Bush who makes the following statement: That he entered the U. S. service under the following named officers and served as herein stated. In the spring of 1778 (does not recollect the precise time), he volunteered in Capt. Samuel Pringle's company of Indians spies, he joined the company of Capt. Pringle at the Buckhannon Ft. then in the county of Monongalia, Va. and continued in the service as an Indian spy under Capt. Pringle until in the fall of 1779 when he was discharged. While under Capt. Pringle he was engaged in spying from the Buchannon Fort, then in the county of Monongalia, now in the county of Lewis, to the headwaters of the West Fork and the Little Kanawha rivers, and frequently witnessed the massacre of the Indians, and was required to pursue the savages to the Ohio River; his lieutenant's name he thinks was Westfall, he thinks Capt. Pringle's Co. belonged to Col. Morgan, Regiment of militia in Monongalia Co., Va., he thinks Capt. Pringle gave him a discharge but cannot be confident, if he did it is lost; he was in the service under Capt. Pringle as an Indian spy about eighteen months; when he entered the service under Capt. Pringle he resided on Buckhannon river in Monongalia Co., Va. In April or May, 1781, according to his present recollection but cannot be confident, as a substitute for his brother John Bush at the Buchannon Fort in Monongalia Co., Va., he joined Capt. Jackson's Co. of militia, Wm. White was Lieut., the ensign's name he has forgotten. He was marched soon after from Buchannon Fort to the Fort at the mouth of Elk creek. Shortly after he was marched to Morgantown and there joined Col. Morgan's reg. and shortly after was marched to the "New Store" on Monongalia River about 15 miles from Pittsburg, and there joined General Roger Clarke's army; stayed there a considerable length of time preparing boats and provisions for the campaign, descended the river to Pittsburg where the whole army got in boats and went down the Ohio river to its Falls, Louisville, that in descending the river he was frequently required to act as a hunter. The hunting party he thinks was commanded by a Col. Green. One day while engaged as a hunter he discovered two deer on the north side of the Ohio river. (The hunters were advised not to hunt on that side of the river for fear they might be misled by the Indians.) Declarant however, persuaded the others to land him and he killed the 2 deer. Declarant presented Genl. Clarke with the brain of one and he received it with expressions of kindness and treated declarant to "whiskey." That he with Genl. Clarke's army arrived at the falls of the Ohio according to his recollection in August, 1781, and continued there some time. While near the Bear Grass Fort five officers were killed, three of whom he thinks were



Captains; when the news arrived at the fort about 30 men were ordered out to destroy the Indians responsible for the deed. He was one of the party. The party with 2 friendly Indian guides proceeded to the place and found the dead bodies. They pursued the Indians to a place where it crossed the Ohio about five miles above the Falls. The party there gave up the pursuit and went back for the bodies which they buried at the Falls. He with many others became sick with the fever and was unable to return home after he was discharged which was in the fall of 1781. He remained sick all winter and reached home sometime the following spring making his whole service two years and six months. He thinks he received a discharge for this last service, but if so it has been lost. He resided at the said Buckhannon Fort when he substituted for his brother in Capt. Jackson's Co.

His  
JACOB X BUSH."  
Mark

Alexander West and David Sleeth both testified for Jacob Bush and their affidavits are of more than casual interest.

"VA. LEWIS CO. — TO WIT:

"Alex. West, a man of unquestionable veracity, personally appeared before the subscribed Justice of the Peace in and for said County and made oath that in May, 1781, he with Jacob Bush of Lewis County joined Capt. George Jackson's Company, and knows that said Bush marched and joined General Clarke's Army and with it descended the Ohio River to its Falls and was there discharged, said Bush got sick at the Falls and when the Army was discharged was unable to return home; he thinks said Bush did not get home until sometime in the spring or early part of the summer of 1782.

His  
ALEXANDER X WEST.  
Mark

"Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of November, 1832.

(Signed) JOHN McWHORTER, J. P."

"VA. LEWIS CO. — ss

"David W. Sleeth, a man of veracity and truth, personally appeared before the subscribed Justice of the Peace in and for said County and made oath that he recollected that Jacob Bush of Lewis County served as an Indian Spy under Capt. Samuel Pringle for a considerable time, from his knowledge of said Bush's services under said Capt. Pringle he supposed that he must have served under said Pringle about 18 months, is confident he was in said service upwards of a year. He also recollects that in the spring of 1781 said Bush substituted for his brother John Bush in Capt. George Jackson's Co. and was marched from the Buckhannon Fort, and it was understood joined Genl. Clarke's Army near Pittsburg and descended the Ohio River to its Falls; he recollects that said Bush did not return from said service until in the spring or early summer of 1782. He has known Bush for many years ever since about the year of 1776; he has always been esteemed a man of veracity and truth.

(Signed) DAVID W. SLEETH.

"Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of November, 1832.

SAMUEL Z. JONES, J. P."

This affidavit is accompanied with a brief from Mr. Jones stating that "what Sleeth says is entitled to full confidence."

Jacob Bush was born in Hampshire County, Virginia, 1756. In the fall of 1782 he married Margaret Swan, on the South Branch, where they lived until the fall of 1785, then moved with their two oldest children, Peter and "Susan," to now Lewis County, West Virginia. Jacob Bush did not live to reap any benefits from the pension due him; but died Nov. 28, 1832.

The law required that the widow, to be entitled to pension, should have been married to the soldier prior to 1794. Mrs. Bush proved her marriage and was granted eighty dollars a year, to commence March 4, 1831. Margaret Bush died July 28, 1847, at the age of ninety or ninety-one years. Her surviving children who drew the money due their mother were Peter, born 1783, Henry, Jacob, John, George; Elizabeth married Stump; Margaret married Stump; Barbary married Fisher; Susannah married Simpson. Before her death another son, Michael Bush, died, leaving a widow and two children, Mary and Adam Bush.

#### DECLARATION OF LIEUTENANT JACOB WESTFALL.

Westfall stated on oath:

"That he entered the service of the U. S. under the following named officers and served as herein stated. General George Rodgers Clark, Commander in Chief. In the regiment of Col. Zechariah Morgan, commanding a regiment of volunteers. Major William Louder (who became unhealthy and obtained leave to return home in about one month after he joined the regiment), Adjutant John Maughen, Captain George Jackson, first Lieut. Jacob Westfall, this applicant; 2nd Lieut. William Whight, Ensign Hezekiah Davidson who acted as Quartermaster Sergeant. Captains in said regiment William Breene (very eligible), Johnston, Whaley, Stewart. This applicant left home on June 20th, 1781, and he ——— at Morgantown on the 29th day of the same month and served a term of six months. The regiment to which applicant belonged marched from Morgan Town in the State of Virginia to the New Store (as it was then called) on the Monongalia river, and there served General Clark with Col. Crocket's regiment of regular troops. The applicant resided at the time he entered the service as above in Tigers Valley, Monongalia County, now Randolph County, Virginia. The object of this expedition as this applicant was informed by General Clark was to march to Detroit which was in the possession of the British, and if possible to take that place. The two regiments took water on board of boats at the New Store, the 20th of July, and descended the river and landed four miles below Fort Pitt and continued there for some days collecting provisions. After leaving the encampment below Fort Pitt, we did not land again until we arrived at Whiting when a council was held, the conclusion of which was to continue down the river to an island below the mouth of the Little Ken-

haway river and wait the arrival of Col. Laughery who was expected on with 200 men. After landing on said island and remaining a few days, several men deserted and a council was held and the idea of marching to Detroit was abandoned, as the force was considered by us to be insufficient. It was then determined by the general and officers to continue down the river to Kentucky and raise an additional force of Kentucky militia and march out against some of the Indian towns. Major Cracroft was left with some men to guard some boats of provisions until Col. Laughery should arrive. Col. Laughery came on some time afterwards, and after descending the Ohio River about 15 miles below the mouth of the Great Miami river, he was discovered by the Indians with his boats between an island and the main land and the whole detachment was either killed or taken prisoners. Gen. Clark continued down the river to the Falls of the Ohio where a two [days'] council was held with the Regular Volunteer and Kentucky Militia officers, and it was then and there concluded that to raise a sufficient force and march against the Indian Towns, the season would be too far advanced for the volunteers to return home to the state of Va., the distance being too great. The applicant was not engaged in any battle, there being none fought during the campaign. The Indians killed several persons belonging to the Army outside of Col. Laughery's detachment. The applicant recollects the names of the following officers in Col. Crockett's Regiment of Regulars, to wit: Major Wales, Captains Tipton and Chapman (who were both killed by the Indians in Kentucky), Young, Carney and Chenny (or Chenry). The applicant has no documentary evidence of his claim, his commission having long since been lost, worn out or destroyed, and does not know the residence of anyone who served on said campaign who is now living

(Signed) JACOB WESTFALL."

Lieutenant Jacob Westfall was born October 10, 1755. He was the builder of Westfall's Fort, Randolph County (West), Va., and was an active partisan during the border wars. His declaration for pension was executed September 1833, in Montgomery County, Ind., but he was then a resident of Putnam County, Ind. He was awarded \$80.00 a year. Lieut. Westfall died March 5, 1835. He was married in Tygart's Valley, 1777; had one son, Cornelius. His widow, Mary Westfall, applied for pension from Boone County, Ind., November 13, 1838, aged 80 years.

Since the foregoing was written, Cutright's *History of Upshur County, West Va.*, has been published; from which the following wherein Capt. White and John Cutright figure prominently, is copied:

#### "FLIGHT OF 1770 AND PURSUIT OF INDIANS."

"Many of the most thrilling incidents in the pioneer settlement of the waters of the Buckhannon, are like unto the common laws of England, unwritten, traditional, handed from generation unto generations in fireside stories. Therefore,

many must be the names of heroes lost in the oblivion of bygone years because no one cared, peradventure was not able, to enroll them on the annals of the past. Such a chapter is the following: We know it only through traditional sources. Paul Shaver tells it to Colonel Henry F. Westfall, in 1821, and he in turn converts it into notes and communicates it to older citizens now living.

"Soon after the first settlement of the year 1770 had been made on the Tygarts Valley, Buckhannon and West Fork Rivers and their tributaries, and before many inroads and invasions had been made by the merciless savages on these pioneers for the purpose of killing and scalping men, women, and children, or carrying them into captivity, arrangements were made by which spies or scouts were sent out to watch the movements and approach of the Indians, and to report same to the settlers. Indeed companies of these scouts or spies were organized and commanded by proper officials and were obliged to serve alternately by squads. Such military organizations were obtained in the summer of 1770, when a detachment of six men were sent out from Randolph County to spy on the maddened Indians. Four of this small company were, William White, Thomas Drennen, Paul Shaver and John Cutright, the other two are unknown.

"John Cutright was young, a mere boy, small of size, but not a drop of cowardly blood coursed his veins. The scouts went through the boundless forests following the meanderings of the Little Kanawha River to its conjunction with the Ohio. They descended this latter stream as far as the mouth of the Great Kanawha. After a season of inspection, scouting and spying near the famous battle grounds of Point Pleasant they began their homeward journey, passing through the trackless wilderness country now embraced in Mason, Jackson, Roane, Calhoun, Gilmer, Braxton and Lewis Counties. They reached the headwaters of the Little Kanawha River without having seen any trace of the savage. Game being bountiful along this river, they resolved to spend a few days on a hunt. They pitched their camp on Stewart's Creek. Indian Summer was now on and the weather was all that could be desired by our scouts (now turned hunters). They never forgot themselves so much as to neglect watching the trail, leading up the little river near where they were camping, and over to the settlement on the West Fork.

"One evening after having spent a full day hunting deer, several of which they had killed and the haunch of one they were now roasting in their camp fire, they heard a noise, at first supposed to be calling of turkeys going to roost. Cutright thinking that a variety of meat would be spice to their simple life, seized his gun saying he would get a turkey for supper. He walked very briskly toward where the turkey calling was heard; he had not gone far before the turkeys were answering each other in different directions. This fact appealed to the strong perceptive faculties of White and aroused his suspicion that all was not right. He called to Cutright to return and let him go and discover the roosting place of the turkeys. He went but a short distance before he returned with the thrilling news that they were nearly surrounded by a band of Indians. The situation was dangerous and the camp fire by means of which the savages had located them was put out. An escape must be now effected or in a short time the scouting party would be attacked. White was the leader, and the rest were his followers. They stole away and traveled at a rapid gait over rocks, hills, and small streams for four miles before a halt was made. On the summit of a ridge they stopped to reconnoiter and to ascertain whether they were pursued or not. Hearing and seeing no signs of the



pursuing Indians they rested there for an hour, during which most of the party went to sleep. White alone being awake and on the lookout. Suddenly he called to his companions, the 'Indians are upon us.' He heard the whine of a dog. They took to their heels again until out of sight of danger then walked on for several miles until they came to a creek of considerable size (most probably Leading Creek). Knowing the keen scent of the Indian canine and the impossibility of being traced in water they waded up this stream a mile and a half or more, coming out on the same side they had entered the stream. They now ascended a hill some distance to its summit, then turned down the stream, keeping about a half mile from it and going about the same distance. Here they halted once more for the purpose of rest and observation. The Indians must have pursued them uncomfortably close, for soon White detected their approach again. This time they descended the hill, crossed the stream behind the Indians, ascended the opposite elevation and took a course along the ridge which led in the direction they wished to go to find the path leading over onto the West Fork. The path could not be found and White concluded that in the darkness they had missed it. They decided to wait the coming of day. To afford themselves the most advantages, they ascended a high bluff to await the action of the pursuers. Again they were driven from their resting place out into the darkness of the night and forced to travel until about sunrise, when they determined to stop, and if the Indians were not too many to give them battle. The most suitable position around them was selected and here they had to wait but for a short time before three Indians were seen on the neighboring hill. Seventeen others joined these three shortly afterwards and all seated themselves upon a fallen tree resting and talking and counseling. Presently they separated, twelve forming the pursuing party, eight returning. Six white men confronted by twelve red men ready for battle would be an easy proposition to wager money upon. Other things being equal superior numbers will win. Therefore our scouting party took themselves to flight rather than fight. Cutright being a mere boy and having traveled all day and night, now showed sign of great fatigue, but the others urged him on. White carried his gun and two others assisted him up the steepest hills, hoping thus to be able to bring him to the Buckhannon River where they thought the Indians would discontinue their pursuit. Cutright held out until the river was reached, when exhausted and crying he lay down and could not go farther. He said to his companions that he could welcome a natural death, but to be tomahawked and scalped by the savage was too hard to bear. 'Save yourselves by flight, but leave me to my fate,' was the answer to the urgent appeals of his companions to proceed. But White said, 'No John, we will never leave you; if one is left all will stay, fight and die together.' White being a man of wonderful strength and endurance gave his gun to one of his companions, took Cutright upon his back and bore him beyond the river. Two other companions carried him to the summit of the river hill opposite the mouth of a run which was then named Cutright's Run, and which afterwards was John Cutright's home. Here all the party fell asleep, but White and Drennen, who stood on guard watching to see the pursuers cross the river. Soon three Indians approached the river on the opposite side and began to cross the stream. A battle was imminent and necessary. Drennen rushed back and aroused his companions. All returned except Cutright, who was too exhausted to do anything. They took their position and waited orders from White to fire. At last the moment

came. The three Indians were in a row. The report of the rifles rang out upon the air, two of the savages were killed and the third was anxious to retreat, but he was not to make his escape for White snatched the gun which had failed to fire and shot the Indian just as he leaped the bank of the river.

"Now for the first time it was known to a certainty why the Indians were able to follow the trail so well. They had a dog which went in advance of his red master. This dog fell into the hands of the victors and became the property of White, who used him to good account afterwards, for it is said that White exchanged the same dog and gun for the Heavner farm, upon which the Buckhannon or Bush Fort was afterwards erected."

I remember having seen a fragment of this narrative in the *Westfall Manuscript*. The date, 1770, is not compatible with the general supposition that there was peace on the border from the closing of Pontiac's War in 1765, to the breaking out of open hostilities in 1774. There was peace, but the wanton aggression and murdering propensities of the borderers kept the Indians in a foment of unrest. The settlements made on the Upper Monongahela, a region justly regarded by the Indians as their domain, and which should have been recognized as such by the Colonial Government, (14) was not unknown to the bordering tribes. There was never any serious attempt by the colonial or state authorities to prevent the settlement of the Trans-Allegheny in accordance with stipulated treaty agreements. The King's edict of 1763 warning settlers from the western waters, was not enforced. The proclamation of 1766 by Gov. Penn of Pennsylvania, and Gov. Faquier of Virginia, forbidding "His Majesty's subjects" from settling west of the mountains, may well be termed farcical. In 1769 the garrison at Fort Pitt "attempted" to remove all intruders to the eastern side of the mountains, but the soldiers were withdrawn, and the settlers returned without further molestation. Back of this pretense at justice, can be seen the set intentions of the colonials to gain speedy possession of this coveted domain. The *Ohio Company*, organized 1748, had for its object the settling of the Trans-Allegheny, and as early as 1750 their surveyor, Christopher Gist, had penetrated to the falls of the Ohio. The tribes beheld these encroachments with increasing alarm, and evidently scouts from their own towns kept close watch upon the movements of the aggressors. It may have been such a band with whom the whites on this occasion came in contact; or it may have been a hunting party only, who, finding the intruders so far from the settlements gave chase with disastrous

(14) See page 441.

results to themselves. But it can hardly be conceived that an organized body of scouts "were sent out from Randolph County to spy on the maddened Indians" in 1770; Randolph County was not formed until 1787, nor was this region at that time haunted by "maddened Indians." The strangest part of the story is that a "war" party of twenty Indians on the trail of six armed foemen, should of its own volition dwindle to three in number, and yet continue the pursuit. The narrative as a whole is not in accord with the known principles of Indian warfare.

That some such occurrence took place there can be no doubt. Col. Westfall was acquainted with both Paul Shaver and John Cutright, and possibly others of the bordermen. The narrative is interesting in more ways than one. Shaver, one of the actors, was, on his own declaration granted a pension as a soldier of the Revolutionary War, from 1776 to 1780, but was at the instance of W. G. Singleton, Special Pension Examiner, afterwards dropped from the pension roll as too young for military service during that struggle. If Singleton's charges are true, then it is hard to conceive how a man of Colonel Westfall's judgment could be so misled as to seriously consider Shaver a full fledged scout in 1770.

#### SHAVER'S DECLARATION.

"On this 12th day of Oct. 1833, personally etc., before me, James M. Camp, J. P. for Lewis County, Va., Paul Shaver, aged 74 years, makes the following statement. That in the year 1776 in April of that year he was ordered out as an Indian spy by Col. Warrick under Capt. Maxwell. He spied in Randolph Co. from April 1776, till Nov. 1776, himself and John Elliott detected the Indians at three different times during that summer and each time they retreated without making any attack, but once stole some horses and escaped with them, two of the horses belonged to Runyon. He was discharged in November 1776, having served more than six months in the service as an Indian spy (a private) in Capt. Maxwell's Company of Indian spies. Then in the spring of 1777 in April of that year he volunteered as a private in a company of Virginia Militia, most of whom were drafted, but declarant volunteered to make up a company under Captain Stuart for the defense of the Western Waters. When Capt. Stuart's Company was raised they were marched from what is now Randolph County to West's Fort in what is now Lewis County. There were ascertained a number of Indians in the neighborhood or distant about thirty miles on Salt Lick, some of whom in May 1777, appeared in the neighborhood of West's Fort and killed and scalped one woman, Mrs. Freeman. A few of Capt. Stuart's men in pursuit came in sight, wounded one Indian who got into thick woods with his fellows and prevented further pursuit. Capt. Stuart with his company marched to Salt Lick Creek, the Indians had dispersed. Capt. Stuart and company returned to West's Fort thence to Lowther's Fort, from that place, now Harrison County, 6 miles from where Clarksburg now stands,

Capt. Stuart detached declarant and 10 others as Indian spies to spy in what is now Lewis and Harrison till November, and then return to Westfall's Fort in Randolph, to which place he had marched with his other men. He spied in said tract of country till sometime in Nov. 1777. Then went to Westfall's Fort, from thence to Warrick's Fort where he joined his Captain & company and was in Nov. 1777 discharged, having served more than six months this tour as a private militia man and Indian spy. He then, in 1778, in the spring with several others migrated to what is now Kentucky, settled near where Louisville now stands. He was, in July 1778, drafted to go a tour of three months against the Indians in Illinois County as it was then called, was marched under Captain Andrew Kincaid. The whole under G. R. Clark did not succeed in bringing the Indians to a fight. Returned in the fall of 1778 to Louisville having served his draft of 3 months—was discharged. Then sometime in the winter of 1778 and 1779 Col. Clark conceived the notion of again marching against the Indians in the Illinois County as we then called it, declarant volunteered to go a tour of six months under Capt. Christy; they started, he thinks, Feb. or March 1779, [June 1778] from Louisville, marched to a place called Kaskaskias, there they completely surprised the garrison, he thinks, took the British General or Governor prisoner. Here declarant was stationed with other militia troops a short time whilst Gen. Clark prepared and sent some mounted men on horses taken at Kaskaskias higher up the county and took, as he then heard, three other Indian towns. Col. Clark understood by some means that a large force was concentrating, he stationed his militia and others, some at Kaskaskias and other towns. He soon drew in his troops to Kaskaskias and appealed to all to volunteer longer, declarant with the other troops did so. He was placed under his old Capt. Kincaid stationed at Kaskaskias as a private militia man agreed to stay till the war was settled in that quarter. Col. Clark with some men proceeded in Feb. (1780) as affiant thinks up the Wabash River to Fort Vincent as we then called it, but now Fort St. Vincent or Vincennes. He took that fort which was defended by Col. Hamilton and Indians and British. He, declarant, continued in that Illinois County as a volunteer militia (a private) under Capt. Kincaid, the summer of 1780 till November of that year, when he with other militia troops was marched to Louisville and discharged in November 1780. In this campaign he was more than eighteen months in service from February or March 1779 till November 1780. He received a wound in battle at a place called Andersontown which had healed up (in his right leg) now again broke out and so continues to this day. He served more than two and one-half years in the Revolutionary War. He lives more than thirty miles from Lewis County Court House, is too infirm to attend court, has no clergyman residing near him. He knows of no person whose testimony he can procure who can testify to his services as a soldier of the revolution.

His  
PAUL X SHAVER."  
Mark

Shaver stated that he was born in Pendleton County, Va., in the year 1759.



"Leaven Nichols, and David S. Cox both testify that Paul Shaver is believed in the neighborhood to have been a soldier in the Revolutionary War and that he has a good reputation and character.

(Signed) DAVID S. COX

His

LEAVEN X NICHOLS

Mark

(Signed) JAMES M. CAMP, J. P."

John Mitchell and Henry Flesher testified to W. S. Singleton July 1834, that Shaver was too young to have been in the war, and he was dropped from the pension roll as a fraud. From all the evidence gathered, Shaver certainly suffered an injustice at the hands of the over-zealous Pension Examiner. He evidently saw service on the border during the Revolution, but he could not have figured in the "Flight of 1770."



## CHAPTER XI

Many prominent writers insist that Dunmore's War was inevitable; the actual beginning of the Revolution, and that hostilities were precipitated by the murdering propensities of the Indians alone. Not a few, however, charge that these conditions were created at the instance of Governor Dunmore and his lieutenant, John Connolly, who, for self-aggrandizement or as emissaries of the British Government, foreseeing the coming struggle, sought to engross the attention and resources of Virginia in a disastrous Indian War. Pages have been written in support of these accusations, and it would redound to the honor of the Virginias could they be verified. But it should be remembered that the conflict of 1774 was purely Virginia and Indian, waged on the Western Virginia border, and it is there that we are to look for the immediate, if not the primal, cause of the trouble. It is noteworthy that the long list of murders committed on peaceable tribesmen in the white settlements east of the mountains, prior to the outbreak, did not provoke the war. *Roosevelt* summarily settles the cause and *statu quo* of the Dunmore War in a single paragraph.

"Nor must we permit our sympathy for the foul wrongs of the two great Indian heroes (1) of the contest to blind us to the fact that the struggle was precipitated in the first place, by the outrages of the red men, not the whites; and that the war was not only inevitable, but was also in its essence just and righteous on the part of the borderers. Even the unpardonable and hideous atrocity of the murder of Logan's family, was surpassed in horror by many of the massacres committed by the Indians about the same time. The annals of the border are dark and terrible." (2)

This sweeping attempt at vindication of the borderers, reeking with acrimony for the Indians, might be convincing, did it contain a single instance of a "massacre committed by the Indians about the same time," that even approached in horror the murder of Logan's family. Our Indian conquests have *all* been "just and righteous" in the eyes of the average white man.

*Prof. Maxwell* in discussing this topic, says:

"\* \* \* The first act of hostility was committed in 1773, not in West Virginia, but further south. A party of emigrants, under the leadership of a son of Daniel Boone, were on their way to Kentucky when they were set upon and several were

(1) See page 442. (2) p. 442.

killed, including young Boone. There can be no doubt that this attack was made to prevent or hinder the colonization of Kentucky. Soon after this, a white man killed an Indian at a horse race. This is said to have been the first Indian blood shed on the frontier of Virginia by a white man after Pontiac's War. In February 1774, the Indians killed six white men and two negroes; and in the same month, on the Ohio they seized a trading canoe, killed the men in charge and carried the goods to the Shawnee towns. Then the white men began to kill also. In March [1774] on the Ohio, a fight occurred between settlers and Indians, in which one was killed on each side, and five canoes were taken from the Indians. John Connolly wrote from Pittsburg on April 21, to the people of Wheeling to be on their guard, as the Indians were preparing for war. On April 26, two Indians were killed on the Ohio. On April 30, nine Indians were killed on the same river near Steubenville. On May 1, another Indian was killed. About the same time an old Indian named Bald Eagle was killed on the Monongahela River; and an Indian camp on the Little Kanawha, in the present county of Braxton, was broken up, and the natives were killed. This was believed to have been done by settlers on the West Fork, in the present county of Lewis. They were induced to take that course by intelligence from the Kanawha River that a family named Stroud, residing near the mouth of the Gauley River had been murdered, and the tracks of the Indians led toward the Indian camp on the Little Kanawha. When this camp was visited by the party of white men from the West Fork, they discovered clothing and other articles belonging to the Stroud family. Thereupon the Indians were destroyed. A party of white men with Governor Dunmore's permission destroyed an Indian village on the Muskingum River." (3)

Here is a sinister array of aggressive crime on the part of the Indians, with justified retaliation by the whites. Unfortunately for its object however, the events are not given in chronological order. The killing of young James Boone and five of his companions, emigrants under the leadership of the elder Boone, had been preceded in Kentucky by desultory fighting between adventurous white men and Indians. It is significant that John Findlay who was the first to enter the wilds of Kentucky, was never disturbed by the red man. It was not until Boone, in company with Findlay and four others, in 1769, repaired to that region, and after spending several months in killing game, were they molested. Boone and Stuart were surprised and captured. Many writers insist that during their captivity, the camp of Boone and Stuart was broken up by Indians, and their companions killed, scattered, or returned home. But it would appear from the investigations of others, among them *Dr. Thwaites*, that the returning prisoners found the camp and its occupants unmolested. In the meantime they were joined by Squire Boone and Alexander Neely, whom Squire had found on New (Great Kanawha) River. (4)

(3) See page 442. (4) p. 442.

The famous Long Hunters had already invaded this primeval wilderness and were slaughtering its teeming game by the thousands. This wasteful destruction of their sustenance, a gift from the Great Spirit, enraged the Indians, and in consequence the aggressors, hunters and explorers met with armed resistance. The Long Hunters shot buffalo, elk and deer for their skins, and Indians for their scalps.

Boone and his party were in reality Long Hunters. During the summer of 1770 while encamped on the Red River, Alexander Neely killed and scalped two Indians whom he found at a Shawnee village on a tributary creek. (5)

Stuart (also spelled Stewart) alone of the party was killed by the Indians, but whether prior or subsequent to the murder of the Shawnees by Neely, writers differ. *Roosevelt* declares that in the death of Stewart, "the Indians had wantonly shed the first blood." (6) But the elucidation by *Dr. Thwaites* is conclusive that Stuart was killed *after four of Boone's party had left for the settlement* and that "Neely, discouraged by his [Stuart's] fate, returned home." (7) This is positive evidence that Boone's party in reality "wantonly shed the first blood." It is obvious that Neely killed the two Shawnees *before* he "became discouraged and returned home."

The Indian killed at a horse race was a Cherokee, at Watauga, a settlement supposedly in Virginia, but located within the Cherokee lands, North Carolina. Watauga, like the early Trans-Allegheny settlements, was outlawed, so far as State or Colonial Government was concerned. The murder was committed at a friendly gathering of both Indians and whites, in celebrating the signing of a treaty between the Cherokees and the settlers of Watauga in 1772. (8) This crime has been excused on the grounds that the men implicated had lost a brother in the attack on Boone's emigrants in 1773. This is error, the friendly Cherokee was killed *a year previous to the Boone tragedy*. In the face of these facts, *who* were the aggressors in Kentucky? (9)

No serious trouble with the Cherokees resulted from the Watauga outrage; nor was that nation involved in Dunmore's War. It is averred, however, that the attack on Butler's trading canoe, near Wheeling, in February, 1774, containing three white men, in which one of the party was killed and another one wounded, was by a few outlaw Cherokees. If so, the act may have been provoked by the Watauga tragedy.

(5) See page 442. (6) p. 442. (7) p. 442. (8) p. 442. (9) p. 442.



Rolls of the Virginia State troops, preserved in the Virginia State Library, Richmond, with negative results. To an inquiry to the War Department, Washington, came the reply:

"The records show that one John Cutright served as a private in Captain Machen Boswell's Company, 2nd Virginia State Regiment, commanded by Colonel Gregory Smith, Revolutionary War. The date of his enlistment has not been found of record, but his name appears on the muster rolls of the company covering the period from September, 1778, to February, 1779. He was discharged March 6, 1779. The company to which he belonged was at various times commanded by Captain John Lewis. No record has been found of any other man of the same or similar name as a member of any Virginia military organization in service in the war of the Revolution."

Gregory Smith was commissioned Captain in Seventh Virginia Regiment, February 7, 1776, and resigned 28th November, 1776. He was made Colonel of the Second Virginia Regiment from 1777 to 1778. Machen Boswell was commissioned First Lieutenant Second Virginia Regiment, 6th October, 1777, and was promoted Captain 15th September, 1778, and served to February, 1781.

While there is much confusion in the dates and records, a close study of Cutright's narratives precludes a logical inference of any premeditated attempt at deception. The discrepancies reveal a faulty judgment, but not the willful prevaricator. His rating at the Pension Office for veracity was *first-class*. In his first declaration, no mention is made of his career in the main army, nor did he at any time allude to the important fact that he had been wounded while on duty as a spy. When compared with the actual events in his life, the scout's narrative is one of commendable modesty. Profoundly illiterate, his capabilities were measured solely in his skill as woodsman, scout, and warrior. His faculty for delineation was limited, and his conception of dates most vague. He could narrate the incidents in his career, but could not intelligently connect them with contemporary events. He was a maker of history, but not a chronicler, and more eloquent with his rifle than with his tongue.

I am inclined to believe that there were two John Cutrights from the Western border who served with the Virginia troops in the Revolution, and that it was not John Cutright, the scout, who enlisted under Col. Gregory Smith, but was perhaps, his uncle,

John Cutright, Sr., who also fought in the battle of Point Pleasant. (11)

We find a certificate of marriage of John Cutright and Deborah Osborn in Randolph County, Virginia, in 1799, but whether this was a later marriage of the Senior Cutright is not known. There is a tradition current among the Cutrights on the Buckhannon River that there were two branches of the family in that region, and that John Cutright and Deborah Osborn were the grandparents of Enoch Cutright, who, it is averred, had Indian blood in him. There was a Peter Cutright in a skirmish with the Indians on Hacker's Creek in 1780, (12) but I know nothing of his antecedents. He was, in all probability, of the same family.

Error has crept into history regarding Cutright's age, and the year of his death. Both *Border Warfare*, and *History of Upshur County, W. Va.*, state that he died in 1852, at the age of 105 years. According to Cutright's own declaration, he was born in 1755. In the testimony of John Lemmons in behalf of Rebecca Cutright, widow of John Cutright, when she applied for her husband's pension, we find that John Cutright died (Friday) March 8th, 1850. The widow at the time was too infirm to appear in court. Mrs. Cutright was a daughter of John Truby, and married John Cutright January 2, 1788. Isaac Edwards, D. D., was the officiating minister.

Hon. W. C. Carper, of Buckhannon, West Va., is perhaps the only man now living, (1908) who remembers seeing John Cutright. It was in 1838 when Mr. Carper was about twelve years of age that Cutright came to the Carper homestead on Turkey Run. Mr. Carper writes me: "The old scout came upon the porch, when he and I were alone for a short time, and I distinctly remember his appearance. He was about five feet nine inches high and heavily built, complexion dark, eyes dark, and his hair was then white. He told me that he once stopped under a walnut tree near where Point Pleasant Church now stands on the head of French Creek, 'to crack walnuts, and then a damned Injun shot me.' He showed me where the ball had entered under his arm, and glanced around the ribs and came out under the arm on the other side. Cutright added, 'I stuck a chaw terbacker in the bullet hole.' At this juncture of the conversation, my father came up and began to talk to Cutright on the subject of religion. The veteran Indian fighter seemed averse to this topic and abruptly

(11) See page 439. (12) p. 439.

"Ad, quit talking about religion; it is all damned nonsense." concluded Mr. Carper, "is the only time I ever saw Cut- and the above subjects all that I ever heard him talk about." Christopher Cutright, when interviewed by me, in commenting on the deeds of his father and associates, said, "When Billy [m] White and Jesse Hughes went on an Indian killing they all with whom they came in contact, not even sparing women and children." When asked which of these two noted men was the most desperate and cruel in his forays against the Indians, came the laconic reply, "It was about buck up." "And," said the old man, "my father was about as bad as they were, Samuel Pringle, of the sycamore tree, who married my father's daughter was scarce better."

He then related an incident of the Pringle brothers. While in the sycamore, they went in a canoe to an Indian village miles below them on the river, and stole a bag of jerked meat. He gave the details of their narrow escape from detection and pursuit. Then again referring to his father's animosity toward the Indians, he told the following story:

Many years after the last Indian depredation in that country, an Indian passed through the settlement late one evening and was seen by his father. Despite the fact that the scout was old and infirm that he could only walk with the assistance of a cane, his old-time hatred was aroused to that degree that he ran to the gun rack and took down his ancient flint-lock, and before he had time to have shot the Indian had not his family restrained him. Right the old gun was secreted and its owner closely guarded. The Indian disappeared from the neighborhood. (13)

## CHAPTER X

In the early settlement of our country, each community, blockhouse or fort had its recognized chief or headman, who was counsellor and advisor in threatened danger, and leader in all movements against the common foe. These men attained their places because of their superior wisdom and cool judgment in those emergencies constantly arising on an exposed and dangerous frontier. The matter of right or wrong weighed little in the events connected with the Indians. He was fittest to lead, who had the strongest determination to avenge an outrage upon the community, especially if it had been perpetrated by the Indians. The Buckhannon settlement possessed these requisites in the person of Captain William White, who came from Cedar Creek, Frederick County, Virginia. Reference to Captain White in border annals is meagre, and nothing is known positive of his antecedents further than that he was a descendant of Dr. White, of Frederick County, who was the ancestor of the White family of that region. Major John White and Major Robert White, also of Frederick County, were prominent in the defense of the border. (1) From the best information to be had, they all were of the same family. (2)

It is not known how Capt. William White came by his military title, but he bore it in 1768 and was ever after distinguished by it. A search of the Muster Rolls on file in the War Department (which are, however, very incomplete) and of the records of the Bureau of Pensions, Washington, failed to show any history of enlistment or military service of Captain William White, of the Buckhannon, in the Revolution. An inquiry to the Virginia State Library, Richmond, elicited the reply: "The Revolutionary Muster Rolls here on file reveal no enlistment of the William White in question." Usually, each settlement elected its own captain, and in this way White may have come by his title. Such an election was being held at Bush's Fort when the Schoolcraft family were massacred in 1779. These elections were not always confirmed by commissions.

Captain White and Colonel William Crawford were personal friends, and White was identified with many expeditions conducted by that famous officer against the Indians. He was also

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Many years after the last Indian depredation in that country, a solitary Indian passed through the settlement late one evening and was seen by his father. Despite the fact that the scout was so aged and infirm that he could only walk with the assistance of a cane, his old-time hatred was aroused to that degree that he hobbled to the gun rack and took down his ancient flint-lock, and would have shot the Indian had not his family restrained him. That night the old gun was secreted and its owner closely guarded until the Indian disappeared from the neighborhood. (13)

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in the battle of Point Pleasant under Colonel Sevier. (3) With his experience in the field was coupled the superior skill of the scout, the spy and the woodsman. Back of these qualities was a strong constitution, a fearless nature and a relentless hatred for "everything Injun." The red flame of war had no terrors for him, neither had the white wing of peace any restraint for his insatiate thirst for Indian blood. Captain White's schooling was savage, and he proved an apt scholar. Just prior to Dunmore's War, he killed a peaceable Indian on the Wappatomaka. For this, he was imprisoned at Winchester, but an armed mob of his infuriated friends soon set him at liberty. (4)

While visiting Colonel Crawford at "The Meadows," in the Alleghenies in 1768, White in company with an Irishman went hunting in the glades, where they found two Indians. According to the story of White and his companion, the Indians, "the moment they discovered the two white men, flew behind trees and prepared for battle." The Indians were both killed, for which White and the Irishman were arrested and placed in the Winchester jail. Immediately, Captain Fry at the head of an armed mob of fifty-five or sixty men, urged on by a throng of cheering spectators, forced the jailor at the muzzle of a loaded rifle to surrender the prison keys. The door was thrown open and the prisoners liberated. (5)

It is not at all probable that the two Indians killed by White and the Irishman were at the time on the warpath. It must be said that most of the victims of murder on the border, from the close of Pontiac's War to the Dunmore War of 1774, were Indians. Nor do we find that any of the murderers ever received just punishment. The stories of the two releases of Captain White from the Winchester jail are two accounts of the same transaction. They portray most vividly the character of the man and the sentiment of the people. The work of the mob was only a repetition of the one that had previously released from the same prison, for a like crime, the red-handed Judah, (6) and was an emphatic approval and endorsement of the crimes which led to Dunmore's War. In these and like occurrences, we have an unconscious portrayal of the true status of border society.

The exact date of White's arrival in the Buckhannon settlement cannot be determined, but it was sometime between 1769 and 1771. Nor did he come unknown. Most, if not all, of the

(3) See page 439. (4) p. 440. (5) p. 440. (6) p. 440.

settlers had been his associates on the "Branch" and they recognized his superior ability in woodcraft. He was the ideal frontiersman and woodsman, and although I have been unable to find where he ever served as captain in the Buckhannon settlement, he was the recognized head scout of the colony. It would appear, however, from the declaration of Jacob Bush and Jacob Westfall that White was a lieutenant in Captain George Jackson's Company of Volunteer Militia, 1781. (7)

It is to the indefatigable efforts of Colonel Henry F. Westfall, a grandson of Captain White, that we are indebted for much of the heretofore unwritten history of this renowned scout on the western Virginia border. Colonel Westfall got his information direct from John Cutright and others who were boon companions and associates of Captain White.

By *Withers* he is mentioned four times; the first, in the incident of his imprisonment and release; second, his part in the murder of the Bull Town Indians; third, his capture by the Indians on the Little Kanawha, and his escape and return to the settlements; fourth, his death at the hands of the Indians near Buckhannon Fort, in 1782. Even in these accounts there are very indefinite statements, especially as to the identity of Captain White as the man who was captured on the Little Kanawha. It would be inferred that the captive was a resident of Tygart's Valley, (8) but at that time he was a member of the Buckhannon settlement.

White's ability to detect the presence of Indians had no equal in the settlement. He once discovered two Indians hiding under the river bank near the fort, and succeeded in killing one of them. At another time, while White was temporarily absent, an Indian entered the settlement under the following circumstances:

It was at the time of the Revolution, and a young lady of the settlement had a lover in the person of an officer in the British army. These young people became acquainted during a brief visit of the officer to that region just prior to the war. The object of his visit is not known, but it was evidently in the interest of the military. During his short stay a warm friendship sprang up between the officer and Captain White, and when the time arrived for the guest to depart for Fort Pitt, the Captain accompanied him. On their way they saw a bear, and White, through deference, permitted his young friend, who was a novice in hunt-

(7) See page 440. (8) p. 440.



ing, to have the first shot. The ball disabled the bear but did not kill it. White withheld his shot and urged his now excited companion to reload quickly and kill the bear before it recovered sufficiently to make an attack or to escape. He did so, but when he again attempted to recharge his rifle, he found that his ramrod was missing. Thinking that in his hurry he had dropped it, he looked about but could not find it. The discomfited hunter became puzzled, when White, who had been regarding him with amusement, laughingly pointed to the now lifeless body of the bear, from the side of which protruded the end of the splintered ramrod; showing that it had not been withdrawn before he made the second shot. From a young hickory, White deftly shaped a new ramrod for his friend, who begged that the incident be kept from his companions at the fort.

After the breaking out of the war, the young officer was assigned duty on the Canadian border, but ready means for communicating with the forest belle was at hand. An active young Indian warrior agreed to carry an exchange of letters, the compensation to be ten gallons of rum. After receiving a description of the young woman, he fastened the letter securely to his person and started fully armed on his long journey to the south. Arriving in the Buckhannon settlement, and knowing the dangers that beset him, he lurked and hid for two or three days, watching for an opportunity to deliver the letter.

One morning the girl had occasion to go from the fort to a nearby cabin, the path leading through a stretch of wood. After proceeding a short distance, she was startled to see a half-naked Indian step suddenly from behind a tree, immediately in front of her. In his belt hung a tomahawk and scalping knife, his left hand grasped a long rifle, while his right hand, which was extended to her, held a sealed package. Before she could recover from her fright sufficiently to utter a cry, the warrior, with a peaceful gesture and friendly "How!" handed her the package and in broken English said, "Squaw be no fraid. Injun no hurt. Me come from white chief. Him send good talk. Me come get squaw's talk when moon wake up," pointing to the brow of the eastern hill. He then glided into the thicket and was lost to view.

It happened that day that some men who were scouting about the woods, discovered the presence of the Indian and gave immediate pursuit. The warrior proved very athletic and soon

outstripped his pursuers. He disappeared over the river bank just below the mill dam, where all trace of him was lost. After an exhaustive search of several hours the pursuit was abandoned. The Indian, it was supposed, despairing of escape, and for the purpose of saving his scalp, had plunged into the river and was drowned.

In the meantime, the young woman had prepared her communication, keeping the mission of the Indian secret. She was sorely grieved when she learned of his fate, for he was the only one by whom a letter could be forwarded. Night came on, and most anxiously did she await the appointed time of meeting. Just as the moon gleamed over the brow of the wood-crested hill, she stealthily repaired to the tryst. Like a wraith the Indian glided from the shadow of the thicket and came silently to her side. She handed him the package containing her "talk," also a small bag filled with jerked venison and parched corn. With a grunt expressive of appreciation, the warrior turned and started on his journey to the distant north. In due time he reached his destination, delivered the letter and received the promised rum, on which he and his friends became "gloriously drunk." Of the sequel to this story, nothing is known.

The next day, when Captain White returned to the fort and was told of the Indian and his mysterious disappearance, he chided the men, and declared that if they would go with him to the river he would show them "whar th' Injun was hid." Proceeding to the river bank, White pointed to the sheet of water pouring over the mill dam, and exclaimed, "If yo' had looked behind thar' yo' would have found yer Injun." An examination of the premises proved that his judgment was correct. The wily Indian, hard-pressed, had darted through the cataract of water, where he rested in safety on the apron or platform of timbers built at the foot of the dam.

There is a tradition in that country, handed down through the descendants of Captain White and the Cutrights, to the effect that in the early years of the settlement there were captured near the fort at Buckhannon an Indian and a Frenchman, who were loitering about the country. They were held in captivity. The Frenchman was of a morose disposition and very melancholy. He would not bathe, but took great pride in dressing his hair, which was very long and abundant. He refused food and died of